The Killer Mistake

A critique of Nuh Keller's "Iman, Kufr and Takfir"

ABU HASAN

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THE KILLER MISTAKE

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by
Abu Hasan

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Acknowledgements
Shaykh Asrar Rashid, Shaykh Naveed Jameel
Abu Nibras, Aqdas, Aqib Qādirī, Khalid, Noori, Harun
and all others who contributed to this book

Cover Image:
Abū Bakr Younus

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Ṣafar 1441 / 6 October 2019
Version 1.6 BETA (STILL UNDER REVIEW)

First Version released on 22nd October 2013

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على سيد الأنبياء والمرسلين وعلى آله الطيبين وصحبه الطاهرين

PREFACE

Praise be to Allāh who bestowed insight upon His elect slaves, accomplished in knowledge and steadfast upon *tawĥīd*. He has given them guidance and inspired them to bear unseen witness to His Glory and Greatness and has opened their hearts for the light of faith to enter; and by His Divine Grace, He has cleansed their hearts from doubt and hesitation, malady and malice towards religion. I praise and glorify my Lord, and bear witness that there is no God except Allāh, and our master, Muĥammad ﷺ is His most beloved slave and messenger. Salutations and blessings be upon him, his companions, his family and his pious followers.

In early 2007, Nuh Ha Mim Keller[1] published an article *Iman, Kufr and Takfir* on his website *Shadhili Tariqah*.[2] Keller has a considerable influence among English speaking Muslims and is reputed as an author and translator. His translation of the Shāfiýī fiqh manual *Reliance of the Traveler,*[3] is noteworthy and well received. He has translated other texts and written articles, which can be found (along with audio clips of some of his opinions) on another website.[4] I had a favourable opinion of Keller prior to this article; and even after its publication, we gave him the benefit of doubt and attributed this to a misunderstanding, and that he was probably misinformed. We rejected his views, but we did not refute him immediately.

It was a restrained reaction. I had composed a rough sketch in the following months and left it there. While his mistakes were apparent, I hoped (or wished) that he would have another look and retract his article, or at least write a follow-up correcting some glaring errors. But, that never happened. His further assertion that falsehood is ***not*** essentially impossible[5] for Allāh táālā was a confession of sorts and stifled any lingering hope of remediation and refutation became inevitable. Thereafter, a group of Sunni úlamā in the UK tried to meet

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[1] The original article was published on his website http://shadhilitariqa.com in 2007 and remained thus ever since.

[2] Here is the shortened URL to the article http://tinyurl.com/2rz9lt.

[3] The original Arabic is by Aĥmed ibn al-Naqīb al-Miṣrī [d.709/1367] *Úmdat al-Sālik wa Úddat al-Nāsik*

[4] http://masud.co.uk

[5] Note that 'essentially impossible' or 'intrinsically impossible' is the translation of a technical term, ***muĥāl dhātī***. Keller has said that he does not believe that it is ***muĥāl dhātī***, and he considers falsehood ***muĥāl áraḍī*** or contingently impossible for Allāh táālā. This heretical idea was refuted in a separate paper, *The Truth About a Lie,* first released in June 2010 and subsequently revised in October 2010; a third revision is expected soon in-sha'Allāh.

Keller and offered to clarify their position which was met with apathy – and according to those who met him, he was adamant and unwilling to listen.[6]

Friends were repeatedly requesting me to write a rejoinder, and I had to reconsider my initial apprehension and began composing a response, beseeching and trusting the aid of Allāh táālā. Also, the absence of any response would cause Keller's accusations to gain credibility, and with the passage of time, this may even become an accepted position; if it remains unchallenged, it may also pose a difficulty for future generations of Ahl as-Sunnah.[7] We do not know the real intention of the author: whether these mistakes were inadvertent or deliberate; whether it was a sincere attempt to find a resolution to a long-standing dispute, or just another exercise to exonerate one group and vilify the other. Whatever the case, Keller's article is merely a composite of Deobandi apologia of the past hundred years, and everything else revolves around that objective to absolve Deobandis and frame Alahazrat, as we shall see, in-shā'Allāh.

One may ask, *'why spend so much time and effort to exonerate a scholar from the previous century?'* The answer is, because Alahazrat was a central figure, an authority and the imām of Sunnis at a time when Muslims in the subcontinent were being split in dozens of sects. He is the representative of the group and its foremost leader: ***he is the jamāáh***![8] Even otherwise, it is a praiseworthy deed to vindicate a Muslim when he is falsely accused and slandered; as mentioned in a Ĥadīth narrated by Abū Dardā'a ﷺ:

> He who defends the honour of his brother, Allāh táālā will vouchsafe his face from fire on the day of Judgement[9]

This is also not without a precedent. Imām Ibn Ásākir is a famous Ĥadīth scholar and historian of the sixth century.[10] He was a prolific author and many of his books are multi-volume works. Imām Dhahabi, lists some of them in his *Siyar* thus:[11] *Tārīkh Dimashq* in 16,000 pages,[12] *Muwāfaqāt* in 1440 pages, *Áwālī Mālik* in 1000 pages in addition to scores of short works. His *Tarikh* is well-known, but he is more famous for *Tabyīn Kadhib al-Muftarī,* in which he refutes false accusations against Imām Abu'l Ĥasan al-Ashárī. Many *úlamā* have written books defending previous scholars, like Suyūţī in *Tanbīh al-Ghabī fī Tasfiyati ibn Árabī* and Ibn Áābidīn in *Sall al-Ĥusām al-Hindī li Nuşrati Sayyidinā Khālid al-Naqshbandī.* We follow in the footsteps of illustrious men to defend Sunni scholars, though I am neither worthy nor comparable to a fraction of a thousandth part of those great men who have trodden on this path.

إن لم تكونوا مثلهم فتشبهوا إن التشبه بالكرام فلاح

> If you are not like them, then imitate them / Indeed, imitating noble folk will lead to success

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[6] Shaykh Naveed Jameel has also mentioned correspondence of Sunni úlamā and the reply by Nuh Keller.

[7] One common objection in the future could be: 'If it was wrong, then why did his contemporaries not refute it at that time?'

[8] In *Minaĥ al-Rawđ al-Az'har* of Álī al-Qārī: Even if there remains only one [upright] scholar, who lives atop a mountain, yet, he is the *jamāáh*; because he represents and stands by the principles of the *jamāáh*, then it is, as if he is himself the *jamāáh*'.

[9] *Tirmidhī*, #1938.

[10] Abu'l Qāsim Álī ibn Ĥasan Ibn Ásākir al-Dimashqī (499-571 AH), a prominent Ashárī-Shāfiýī imām.

[11] *Siyar Aálām al-Nubalā*, Vol.12, Pg.671, # 5295.

[12] According to Dhahabi, a ***juz'*** is twenty pages – perhaps this is why, the *juz'* of the Qur'ān (printed in the Middle-East) is usually 20 pages. Dhahabī has said that the book is 800 *juz'* and I have computed the number of pages for all works mentioned above. The modern printed version of *Tārīkh Dimashq* is approximately 40,000 pages (80 volumes of about 500 pages each).

It should be noted that by 2012, there were at least six works in English refuting Keller.[13] I have glanced through them and a number of points I had already listed in my draft are also found therein. Similarities are coincidental[14] and I have not consciously copied from these works. I find it necessary to mention this to acknowledge prior efforts, and to avoid any accusation of plagiarism.

Acknowledgements are due to Abu Nibras, Noori and Aqdas for critical reviews and proofreading my drafts; additionally, Abū Nibras worked on the graphics, brother Noori prepared the bibliography and made suggestions to improve the readability of certain passages; Aqdas followed the progress of the book diligently throughout. Shaykh Asrar Rashid and Shaykh Naveed Jameel [both from UK] kindly consented to review the final draft and made valuable suggestions and corrections. Yet, I am solely responsible for any mistake or error that may have remained unnoticed. Readers are requested to mail us suggestions or corrections, which will be incorporated in the next version, *in-shā'Allāh*.

Notes:

1. Alahazrat is *Barelwi*[15], because he is from Bareilly; just as Imām Muĥammad ibn Ismāýīl is Bukhārī and Imām Muslim is Qushayri; and like Ghazalī, Nawawī, Shadhilī, Kūfī or Baghdādī.

2. We are not a sect separate from *Ahl as-Sunnah*. Our enemies have pejoratively coined the term 'Barelvi' in their futile attempt to malign true Sunnis; but just like Asháŕī or Māturīdī, Barelwi has now become an identifier of true Sunnis in the subcontinent.

3. For years, Deobandis referred to their scholars as *Úlamā e Deoband* to maintain their distinction, in contrast to the scholars of *Ahl as-Sunnah*, who have always referred to themselves and their elders as *Úlamā e Ahl e Sunnat*. The press established in Bareilly was *Matbá e Ahl e Sunnat*; the school in Bareilly was named *Madrasah e Ahl e Sunnat*. In our age, the only group[16] of Sunnis in the subcontinent, that is compatible with Sufis and Kalām scholars all over the world are either among the students of Alahazrat or his admirers and are therefore, known as Barelwis. Even lay people use Sunni and Barelwi interchangeably in the subcontinent.

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[13] The following six refutations can be found online:

1. ***A Just Response to the Biased Author*** by Shaykh Faizan al-Mustafā.
2. ***Explaining the Correct Methodology of Imam Subki in Takfir*** by Shaykh Monawwar Ateeq.
3. ***A Rejoinder on Contextualizing the Hadiths Quoted by Shaykh Nuh*** also by Shaykh Monawwar Ateeq.
4. ***The Voice of Truth*** by Mariam Dastagir.
5. ***A Critique of Nuh Keller*** by an anonymous poster *'Shadilli'* on Sunniport.
6. ***The Fallacy of 'Īmān, Kufr and Takfir'*** a lengthy talk by Shaykh Asrar Rashid in Coventry on January 3rd 2011.

[14] All of us derive from the same sources and anyone analysing these mistakes will arrive at the same conclusions.

[15] Various spellings such as Barelwi, Barelvi, Baraylawi are used. Some people deliberately mis-spell it as Brelwi, Brelvi or Bralwi.

[16] Or those Sunnis in the south, such as Sunnis from Kerala may not be students of Alahazrat, but consider him an imām, and have immense respect and admiration for him.

4. Citations from Keller's article will be highlighted thus:

> In comparison, no Deobandi scholar of note, to the author's knowledge, has yet made takfir of Barelwis.

5. All other citations will be in a different font and referenced in footnotes, thus:

> Whosoever doubts in the kufr of a person who insults the Prophet ﷺ, and that such an [insulting] person deserves to be punished, is an infidel himself.

6. ***Alahazrat***: Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān al-Baraylawi is known as Alahazrat in the subcontinent; in the previous century, it was a honorific to address very senior scholars or high noblemen. In recent times, it has become synonymous with Imām Aĥmad Riđā – and hence it is used throughout the book. A brief biography of the imām, *Who is Alahazrat?* was released by Ridawi Press recently.

7. Keller's article was printed immediately after it was published; in October 2010, a second copy was made, upon which this critique is based.

8. The twin chapters on apostasy and blasphemy are included for an introduction, and to raise awareness about these issues – it was never intended, nor assumes to be the ultimate resource on the two topics.

وباللہ التوفیق

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NOTE: THIS COPY IS STILL UNDER REVIEW AS OF 27th SEPTEMBER 2019, AND IS MOSTLY THE SAME AS THE FIRST EDITION. PLEASE DO NOT SHARE THIS UNTIL THE OFFICIAL RELEASE OF THE SECOND EDITION.

I. OVERVIEW OF THE ARTICLE

Iman, Kufr, and Takfir is a lengthy article, generously peppered with subtle innuendos and fallacies. It is not easy to refute it as a monolithic piece, as insinuations are interweaved with valid statements. Therefore, this requires a two-pronged approach:

1. Pointing out the author's mistake in misquoting, quoting out of context, or drawing erroneous conclusions and
2. Presenting quotes, ĥadīth and rulings in their proper context.

Certainly, both are related; but an approach that tries to address them together may result in one aspect overwhelming the other, and each diminishing the gravity of the other. My intention from the beginning has also been to clarify concepts the author ostentatiously set out to explain in the first place. It is necessary therefore, to break down the article in topics and sections to examine each part separately. Major and minor headings marked by the author himself are as follows:

- **Oneself**
  a. Things That Everyone Knows
  b. Things Not Everyone Knows
  c. Things Disagreed Upon by Ulema
- **Others**
  a. The Enormity of Charging a Muslim with Unbelief
  b. The True Measure of Unbelief
- **The Legal Criteria For Unbelief**
  a. Words That Entail Leaving Islam
  b. The Fallacy of Hearsay Evidence
  c. The Fallacy of Imputed Intentionality; Intentional and Unintentional Insult
  d. The Barelwi-Deobandi Conflict on the Indian Subcontinent
  e. The Six Disputed 'Aqida Issues
  f. The Imputed Insult
  g. Ahmad Reza and the Prophet's Knowledge of the Unseen
  h. What Khalīl Ahmad Said; A Discussion of Khalīl Ahmad's Evidence
  i. The Words of Ashraf Ali Thanwi
  j. Conclusions
  k. The Fallacy of Takfir by Association

For the purpose of our analysis, this article (and the topics above) can be regrouped according to ***themes*** in the subject matter and addressed accordingly. The article can be broadly decomposed thus:

1. The issue of *takfir*; principles, practice and advice to Muslims from reckless *takfir*.
2. On blasphemy of the Prophet ﷺ.
3. Fatwa on insulting the Prophet ﷺ; intended and unintended insults and examples Keller cites to prove his point that unless one intends to revile, saying anything blasphemous does not make one a kāfir.
4. Keller's fallacies: *Fallacy of Hearsay Evidence* and *Fallacy of Imputed Intentionality,* which Keller illustrates by citing the "Sunni-Deobandi Conflict," or what the author calls, the 'fatwa wars'.
5. 'The Six Disputed Issues' between Sunnis and Deobandis according to Keller.
6. Deobandi Apologia: two lengthy paragraphs to justify Deobandi positions, which knowledgeable people from the subcontinent will readily recognise as a rehash of century old Deobandi propaganda.
7. Slander of Alahazrat Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān and character assassination in the major section which forms the essence of the article – either by direct criticism, or as an undertone.

After describing essential concepts in the first two chapters, we will follow the structure of the original article in its analysis. Some of the aforementioned points are discussed in dedicated chapters and the rest are mentioned somewhere in between. Keller's mistakes are so bad, that it is hard to resist the temptation to write a line-by-line refutation.

Iman, Kufr, and Takfir (IKT) starts promisingly and appears to be an attempt to clarify an important issue[17] and to advise Muslims to be careful when accusing others of disbelief. This is a praiseworthy objective in itself and is direly needed in our times. In the first part, the author tries to explain the issue of takfir, the dangers of takfir, warnings against unwarranted takfir and so on. The author cites well-known authorities, Ĥadīth and verses of the Qur'ān to illustrate his argument; and having framed the narrative thus, he proceeds to state his viewpoint.

A framing narrative is a literary device, used by writers for the purpose of preparing the reader's mindset, and subsequently to influence attitudes towards characters or the story itself. The author discusses a concept or an idea, and when he introduces the protagonists eventually, the reader is prepared for correlating people with ideas or situations, using the information provided in the opening sections of the article or book. This is not entirely wrong; actually, it may be quite necessary in lengthy dissertations. But, when the idea or concept is explained in the manner of half-truths and insinuations, the reader is sure to arrive at wrong conclusions – or readily agree with the conclusions drawn by the author. In such a situation, this becomes a legerdemain, by which the author tries to appear unbiased and objective, even though he ploughs towards a set agenda.

Another key aspect of this article is latent orientalism. It may be incorrect and unfair to term the author as an orientalist, but unfortunately, the tone in which he speaks, reeks of orientalist attitudes:

[17] That of *takfir*, as the title proclaims.

> But at the outset one can say that so far as the West was concerned during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, an assumption had been made that the Orient and everything in it was, if not patently inferior to, then in need of corrective study by the West.[18]

One of the obvious examples:

> Knowledge of the above principle could have probably prevented much of the "fatwa wars" that took place around the turn of the last century in India between Hanafi Muslims of the Barelwi and Deobandi schools.

In other words, Alahazrat did not have knowledge of the 'above' principle. Since Keller has described many issues [and citations] before arriving at the principle in question, the impression a reader[19] gets, is that Alahazrat was not aware of all those issues. Consequently, an overwhelming number of scholars and common people in the subcontinent [following Alahazrat] make the same mistake, until Keller teaches them basic principles of *takfir*. One may object that the statement is general here, and Alahazrat is specifically not mentioned; but the author himself puts that doubt to rest:

> In comparison, no Deobandi scholar of note, to the author's knowledge, has yet made takfir of Barelwis.

It was Alahazrat who did *takfir*; and since the Deobandis did not do *takfir*,[20] they are not included in this sweeping generalisation of 'lack of knowledge' of the *takfir* principle. I will return to this again later in the book; this is, but one example of the author's attitude towards Sunni scholars from the subcontinent.

This is also similar to the typical ignorgance[21] of average Americans, concerning the Palestine-Israel issue: they have no clue about the situation on the ground, and their primary source of information is the biased US media; and with this information, they rebuke Palestinians as habitual terrorists and are dismayed as to why Palestinians cannot live with 'peace-loving, humane and democratic' Israel:

> *In comparison, no Israeli, to the author's knowledge, has yet attacked unarmed Palestinians.*

Coming back to the article, let us assume that Keller's objective was indeed to warn people from *takfir* and clarify what constitutes as an insult. A responsible scholar should describe the perils in blasphemy adequately along with articulating his own position on *takfir*. One of the outcomes of the article should have been a clear and unambiguous warning against insulting the Prophet ﷺ or diminishing his exalted rank. This is particularly important in our age when even men of learning are ignorant of etiquette and the care with which one should mention or address the Prophet ﷺ. Therefore it is said, that '*one who is not aware of [the state of] people in his times is an ignoramus.*'[22] I present two examples of how scholars underscore the gravity and the dangers of disrespecting the Prophet ﷺ.

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[18] Edward Said, ***Orientalism***, Third Edition, Penguin.

[19] Particularly those who are not properly acquainted with Imām Aĥmed Riđā or his works, or do not know much about him.

[20] According to the assumption of the author.

[21] ignorance-arrogance.

[22] *Úqūd Rasm al-Muftī*, Ibn Áābidīn.

Even though he argues arguing against a stricter ruling on the punishment of such people, on refusal to accept the repentance of a blasphemer, Imām Ibn Áābidīn still says in his *Tanbīh*:[23]

> The reason for writing this book, is to clarify a few objections on an issue mentioned in ***Úqūd al-Durriyah fī Tanqīĥ al-Fatāwā al-Ĥāmidiyyah*.** The issue was about the ruling concerning an accursed wretch, who doffed the bonds of religion from his neck – by speaking with an unrestrained tongue referring to the Liegelord of all Messengers and the Beloved ﷺ of the Lord of the Worlds. Therein, I mentioned a ruling based on what I considered as a stronger proof from texts that I had perused; a ruling, which was influenced by piety and righteousness; and far removed from bigotry and abject hatred. I mentioned my inclination towards the ruling that the repentance [of such a wretch] would be accepted and that he shall be spared capital punishment, if he reverted to Islām; even though, my heart would not be soothed, nor would it find solace until he was exterminated and put to the sword. However, there is no scope to issue a ruling on the basis of one's own feeling, [24] [particularly] in the presence of clear rulings from scriptural texts.

Imām Subkī, in his *Sayf al-Maslūl*, concerning the same subject says:[25]

> Know, that even though we have preferred the position that, whosoever reverts to Islām [after having blasphemed] and conducts himself properly and sincerely according to Islām,[26] his repentance shall be accepted and that he shall be spared execution. This is said about a hypothetical case, and if such a condition truly exists – as it is only a possibility. Thus, if such a thing truly occurs, and Allāh táālā knows [of such sincerity] then he[27] shall find salvation in the hereafter. However, we fear about such a person who has blasphemed, that his end may be ugly – we beseech Allāh táālā to protect us.
>
> Because, defying the blessed person of the Prophet ﷺ is a grave matter, and the fervour[28] with which he is deemed near Allāh táālā is immense; the protection and defence given to him by Allāh táālā is forceful and fierce. We fear that one who falls into bad-mouthing, disrespecting, finding a flaw in the Prophet ﷺ or attempting to diminish his rank or any such thing will be utterly humiliated by Allāh táālā to the point that He shall not allow them to return to faith, nor give them guidance to return.

Imām Subki concludes the discussion with a stern warning to prevent people from becoming complacent and considering it as a trifling issue; and thereby fall into perdition. Alas for Keller! If anybody in the future – may Allāh ﷻ forbid – utters blasphemies, and present *Iman, Kufr, and Takfir* as their defence, the author will be hard pressed to answer for it. Instead of being a shield for the honour of the Prophet ﷺ, the article trivialises the issue and gives false assurance and flimsy cover for people with unbridled tongues.

That, is not an ordinary mistake.

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[23] *Tanbīh al-Wulāti wa'l Ĥukkām*, Rasāyil Ibn Áābidīn, 1/315.

[24] In spite of my intense hatred of such a person, I did not issue a ruling based merely upon my reaction or feelings.

[25] *Sayf al-Maslul álā Shātim al-Rasūl*, Imām Abu'l Ĥasan al-Subki, p. 213.

[26] ***Ĥasuna islāmuhu***: literally, if his Islām is good, beautiful.

[27] The blasphemer who repents.

[28] ***ghayratu'llāhi lahu shadīdah***.

II. APOSTASY AND TAKFIR

Islām means submission.[29] In the language of sacred law, Islām is obedience, submission and abiding by everything that was brought by our Master Muĥammad ﷺ from his Lord – the message and the guidance; as Allāh táālā says:

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا۟ تَسْلِيمًا ﴿٦٥﴾

> Never, by your Lord! They will not become believers until they make you their judge for disputes amongst them, and do not find in themselves a demur, when you give your verdict; and they submit to it absolutely.[30]

Whosoever contradicts or disputes the submission and obedience to our master Muĥammad ﷺ – or has a doubt or hesitates in accepting it, or does not submit to him externally or internally, is not a Muslim. Here, we mean such things which are proven by *tawātur*[31] and classed as *Essential Requirements of Faith.*[32] Kufr is disbelief and *kāfir*[33] is a disbeliever. Disbelievers are of two kinds: the original disbeliever and the apostate.[34] A person who was never a Muslim[35] is a *kāfir aşlī,* the original disbeliever; and one who becomes a disbeliever after having been a believer at some point is a *murtadd,* an apostate. Imām Nawawī defines apostasy thus:

> ***Apostasy***:[36] To sever the [bonds] of Islām, whether intentionally or by saying or doing something that is disbelief. Regardless of whether such a thing was said in derision, or in denial or actual belief [in such kufr].[37] [Thus] whosoever disbelieves in the Creator or Messengers or belies a Messenger or considers a ĥarām acknowledged by ijmāá,[38] like adultery, as ĥalāl or vice-versa;[39] or rejects that deemed obligatory by ijmāá or vice-versa. Or intends to become a kāfir on the morrow or vacillates[40] concerning the issue – in all such cases, the person becomes an apostate. [Among] actions that cause apostasy: any deliberate action which explicitly

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[29] *Istislām*.

[30] Sūrah Nisā'a, 4:65.

[31] *Tawātūr*: Reported by a multitude through multiple chains and corroborated by a massive majority and through successive generations; such that it defies reason to question its validity.

[32] ***al-málūmu mina'd dīni bi'd đarūrah***. Ábdu'l Ghanī al-Nablūsī, *Asrāru'sh Sharīáh*, p218. This is also mentioned in *Tafsīr al-Kabīr* and other commentaries. Henceforth, Essentials.

[33] Lexically, *kufr* means to hide or conceal; thus a person who conceals the bounties of his Lord is a kāfir.

[34] *Kufr al-Aşlī*: Disbelief from the outset, and *Kufr al-Ţārī*: acquired disbelief. The former is simply termed kāfir and the latter murtadd. Original kāfirs are of five kinds: Atheists who deny a Creator, the Dualists (believe in two gods, like the Magians), Philosophers who believe in God but deny Prophets, Idolators who deny everything and those who accept everything but deny the Prophethood of RasūlAllāh ﷺ, like the *Ýīsawiyyah* Christians [*Durr al-Mukhtār/Radd al-Muĥtār* 4/411].

[35] That is, after puberty.

[36] ***Riddah***: apostasy.

[37] ***istihzā'an aw ínādan aw iýtiqādan***.

[38] Unanimously agreed by an overwhelming majority.

[39] Consider a universally accepted ĥalāl as *ĥarām*.

[40] Undecided whether he will remain a Muslim or become a kāfir; his faith is wavering and thus, he becomes a kāfir.

> mocks religion,[41] repudiation and disparagement[42] of religion such as casting a copy of the Qur'ān in the garbage or prostrating to an idol or to the sun. However, children, the insane[43] and those under duress are exempt from this ruling [if they utter words or commit deeds that cause apostasy]. Apostasy committed by an inebriated person is valid, just as his Islām is valid; and the testimony concerning apostasy is absolutely admissible...[44]

Ibn Nujaym describes the Ĥanafī position on apostasy in the following words:

> The lexical meaning of *murtadd* is a revert. In the parlance of sharīáh, a person who reverts from Islām is a *murtadd*, an apostate as mentioned in *Fat'ĥ al-Qadīr*. In *Badāyiý*, a person will have committed apostasy by uttering a word deemed kufr [we seek Allāh's refuge from it] after having been a believer earlier. Among conditions that are necessary to rule apostasy is sanity: it is not valid to rule someone who has lost his mind as an apostate; nor the child who cannot discern.
>
> Concerning a person whose insanity is sporadic: if he utters kufr in a state of insanity, he is not an apostate; but if he says such things in his right mind, he becomes an apostate. Similarly, apostasy is not charged upon a drunk when inebriated; Imām Abū Ĥanīfah and Imām Muĥammad do not consider puberty as a condition, contrary to Imām Abū Yūsuf; similarly, being a male is not a condition; however, free choice is a condition because the apostasy of a person in duress is invalid...[45]

It is easy to enter Islām, by uttering the Testimony; but one can also go out of it by uttering a word of kufr; and this does not contradict Imām Ţaĥāwī, when he said:

> ...the opinion of Ĥanafī scholars that a person shall not go out of faith except by disavowing that which made him enter it in the first place.[46]

Because, uttering kufr willingly, is disavowing the Testimony. Indeed, one word can cast a person in the depths of hell, as mentioned in a famous hadith narrated by Abū Hurayrah ﷺ, in which RasūlAllāh ﷺ is reported to have said:

> Verily, a slave [may] utter a word that merits the pleasure of Allāh táālā, [and the person is] unaware of it; but still Allāh táālā will raise him in rank because of it. And verily, a slave [may] utter a word that angers Allāh táālā, and the person does not realise [its gravity], even though he falls into fire because of it.[47]

In another narration of Bukhārī:

> A slave utters a word without realising its significance and slips into fire farther than the distance of the east.[48]

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[41] Or things held sacred in religion.

[42] ***juĥūd***: repudiation, ungratefulness, disbelief, rejection, disavowal etc.

[43] ***junūn***: insanity; this also includes people with dementia.

[44] Imām Nawawī, *Minhāju't Ţālibīn*, p501. The accused will be required to repent and the testimony of upright witnesses admitted without further questions. [Shirwānī, *Ĥāshiyah Tuĥfah*]. It should be noted that the para is truncated; the text further mentions the second opinion of Shāfiýīs that testimony should be accompanied by elaboration [*tafşīl*] of what was said or done.

[45] Baĥr ar-Rāyiq, 5/193.

[46] Ibid.,p201, Cf. *Jāmiý al-Fuşūlayn*.

[47] *Bukhārī* #6478, *Muslim* 1/81, *Tirmidhī* #1983, *Nasāyī* #4105, *Ibn Mājah* #3939, Imām Aĥmed in his *Musnad* 1/385.

[48] *Bukhārī* #6477; Áynī says that it could either mean the distance between the 'two' easts, or as it is said in another ĥadīth: 'distance between the east and the west'.

Qāđī Íyāđ has said:

> [Even if] one attests to the Godhood of Allāh táālā and that He is One,[49] and yet believes that He is not Living, or not Pre-eternal, or that He is an accident, or corporeal, or claims that He has a son or a wife, or that He has a father, or that He has come into existence from something, or something else will come out from Him, or that someone or something else was [present] along with Him in pre-eternity - that is, other than His Person and Attributes - or that someone else shaped the universe, or that someone else sustains it; then, such a person is a kāfir by ijmāá of all Muslims. So also, we consider a person who believes that the universe is pre-eternal, or that it shall abide without annihilation – or has any doubts in it.[50]

Imām Fađl al-Rasūl explaining the generic ruling of apostasy says:

> Things that negate submission, which we have mentioned earlier citing Ĥanafī sources: words and actions which indicate disdain [for religion] such as murdering a Prophet – contempt in which, is obvious – or that which is in effect belying [the Prophet] or disputing anything that is proven to have been declared by the Prophet ﷺ and is considered an Essential Article such as: resurrection, reward, the five prayers etc. In some issues, the ruling varies concerning those being in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ and those who are not.[51]

Things which are established as Essentials, proven by scripture and considered *mutawātir*[52] that every commoner and scholar knows it well, such as:

- Believing in the message given by the Prophet ﷺ and in everything that he informed us and commanded us [to do or to abstain].
- That the Existence of Allāh táālā is necessary, and that He is One and Alone; and that He created everything, and He alone deserves to be worshipped, and that He is the Lord and Sustainer, and that He has no partner, and that He is the Only God.
- That He alone is Pre-eternal; and that He alone brings contingent things[53] into existence.
- He is the only Creator and He is Living, Omniscient, Omnipotent and has an Absolute Will.
- The Qur'ān is the Speech of Allāh táālā; and belief in everything the Qur'an has informed us [such as] He Speaks, He is All-Hearing and All-Knowing; that He sends messengers, some of whom are mentioned in the Qur'ān and many others who are not mentioned.
- That He revealed books [to various Prophets in addition to the Qur'ān] and that angels are His honourable slaves.
- That He made ṣalāt, zakāt, fasting and Ĥajj obligatory.

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[49] *Waĥdāniyyah*.

[50] Qāđī Íyāđ in *Shifā* vide *Mútaqad*, p19.

[51] *Mútaqad*, p209. For example, a person refusing the *ṣadqah-fiṭr* after hearing it from the Prophet ﷺ will be a kāfir; but a person refusing it in later times is considered misguided and a sinner. Because the former has no other option except to obey the Messenger of Allah ﷺ after hearing it from his blessed mouth; whereas the latter only disputes the narrators and the report. Unless of course, the latter also disputes the Prophet ﷺ, in which case he shall also be ruled a kāfir, nevertheless.

[52] *mutawātir*: something that is universally known, unanimously agreed upon and transmitted through successive generations without anybody disputing it; something which is undeniable and indubitable.

[53] Because, only the mumkin, or the contingent can exist; and muĥāl is impossible to exist by definition.

- That He shall resurrect the dead and the final hour is destined to come, and there is no doubt in its occurrence.
- That He forbade usury, wine and gambling, as mentioned in the Qur'ān.

In all the above issues, rulings are the same for all, regardless of the person being present in the Prophet's ﷺ time.[54] Books of fiqh and fatāwā list a number of things deemed to be kufr, and the ruling that a person becomes kāfir if he says or does certain things; and all these illustrations are based on fundamental precepts such as slighting religion, or denying an essential article, or blasphemy.[55] Explaining the principle, '*repudiating ijmāá is kufr,*' Ibn Áābidīn quotes Ĥusām Chalpi:

> If the verse or *mutawātīr*[56] ĥadīth is not absolute in its implication,[57] or if the report is itself not *mutawātīr*; or it is absolute in implication – but therein still lingers a doubt; or the ijmāá is absolute and total, or not; it is the ijmāá of the companions or it is not; it is not the ijmāá of all the companions; or it is not absolute in its implication because it is not proven by *tawātur*; or its implication may be absolute, but the ijmāá is implicit;[58] and in all these cases, the person denying ijmāá will not become a kāfir.[59]

The general basis for apostasy is stated by Alahazrat thus:

> Jurists [*fuqahā*] have ruled that one who rejects an absolute precept [*qaţýī*] is a kāfir; but theologians [*mutakallimūn*] specified that it is kufr only when an Essential [*đarūrī*] is rejected, and this [latter] is the safest position.[60]

In *Radd al-Muĥtār*:

> There is no dispute concerning the disbelief of a person who opposes [or rejects] any required component of faith, even if he prays facing our qiblah, even if he is punctual and unfailing in fulfilling obligations and doing good deeds all his life, as explained in *Sharĥ al-Taĥrīr*...[61]

That is about apostasy; but, how and who should decree someone an apostate? It is no different than asking a muftī about a contested issue of divorce or inheritance. It has been a common practice in Muslim communities from early ages to seek a fatwā from a reputed muftī or from the office of fatwā – the *dār al-iftā*. The ruling of takfir should be no different and common people should not proclaim someone a kāfir by themselves,[62] and always seek the opinion of a qualified muftī in the case of apostasy as well; if someone utters a thing that is deemed kufr, one should write to a muftī, explaining the incident and the situation and seek a judgement. The

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[54] *Mútaqad*, p210-211, paraphrased.

[55] In *Sharĥ Fiqh al-Akbar*, p227, Al-Qārī says:

Whoever describes Allāh táālā in a manner not befitting His Majesty or mocks any of His Names or His commandments or rejects His promise of reward or retribution shall be ruled a kāfir.

[56] Mass-transmitted and continuously narrated by successive generations; which is viewed as universal truth.

[57] *qaţýī al-dalālah.*

[58] *ijmāá sukūtī.*

[59] *Radd al-Muĥtār*, 4/407. Quoting refutation of Bazzāzi by Ĥusāmuddīn Ĥusayn ibn Ábd ar-Raĥmān Chalpī (d. 926 AH).

[60] *Mustanad*, Footnote #71.

[61] Ibn Áābidīn, *Radd al-Muĥtār*, Kitāb al-Ṣalah; Bāb al-Imāmah, 1/377.

[62] Citing the fatwā of a muftī is not the same as issuing fatwā oneself.

muftī is also advised to be careful and that he should not be hasty in issuing a fatwā of takfīr. It is said in *Jāmiý al-Fuṣūlayn*:

> Ţaĥāwī reports the opinion of Ĥanafīs, that a person shall not go out of faith except by disavowing that which made him enter it in the first place. Things confirmed to be apostasy will be ruled as such; and if it is indeterminate, or only suspected to be apostasy, the ruling is to withhold [from takfīr]. Because, Islām having been established cannot be negated merely on the basis of a doubt, apart from the fact that Islām shall prevail. When such an issue is presented to a scholar, it is necessary that he should not be hasty in declaring someone [among Muslims] as a kāfir..[63]

Muslims should learn about apostasy, first to save themselves and thereafter to warn others and alert the ignorant. Learning about and identifying apostasy is not the same as decreeing someone a kāfir, as Alahazrat has said:

> The well-researched position is that which we have mentioned many times: there is a [big] difference between something being kufr and to rule someone a kāfir because of it.[64]

Alahazrat has discussed these topics in more detail in his *Mustanad* and *Tamhīd,* among other works.

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What is Takfīr?

Takfīr means to accuse a person or issue a ruling that he has become a kāfir; takfīr means to anathematise, to excommunicate a person as an apostate. It is a serious matter and should not be taken lightly; scholars have warned about the dangers of takfīr and urged muftīs to exercise utmost caution when making takfīr, as Alahazrat has explained:

> Our Prophet ﷺ has warned us from making takfīr of those who say: *lā ilāha illā Allāh*. We do not rule them kāfir, as long as we do not possess proof, as obvious and glaringly apparent as the mid-day sun; and [we shall withhold from takfīr] until the remotest possibility exists to absolve them of kufr.[65]

A person may say or do something which looks as kufr to the observer, but the person did not say or do it with that intention.[66] It is possible that the person might have not understood the meaning of the word or the usage of the term, or meant to say something else and so forth. In all such cases, the ruling depends upon clarification and establishing the intention of the word or deed; Imām Nablūsī says:

> All that is found in books of fatāwā concerning statements classified as kufr, explained and insisted upon by various authors that such a thing is kufr; then [in all such cases] the [ruling] is dependent on the intention of the person who said it. If his intention was indeed that, which is a basis for the ruling of kufr, then he is a kāfir; if his intention was otherwise, then his saying will not be considered as kufr.[67]

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[63] Vide *Baĥr ar-Rāyiq*, 5/201.

[64] *Mustanad*, Footnote #357: Difference between *kufr* and *ikfār*.

65 *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ*, p80.

66 There are a few special cases, such as blasphemy where intention of the speaker is not admissible; also, intention of the person is not admissible when the statement is explicit. See Imām Ibn Ábd al-Salām's book on uṣūl, *Qawāýid al-Kubrā*, 2/215 on when *ta'wīl* is admissible and when it is not – where it is stated that explicit statements will be taken at face-value.

67 *Ĥadīqatu'n Nadiyyah*, 1/304: Slighting the Sharīáh is Kufr.

Álī al-Qārī says in the commentary of *Fiqh al-Akbar*:

> Scholars have mentioned that the issue of ruling someone kāfir [takfīr]: if there are 99 possibilities of disbelief [for a statement] and one possibility that is not disbelief; then it is better for the muftī and the judge to incline towards the meaning that is not disbelief.[68]

In *Fatāwā Khulāṣah*, *Jāmiý al-Fuṣūlayn*, *Muĥiṭ*, *Fatāwā Hindiyyah* etc., it is said:

> If in a particular issue, there are [many] facets and possibilities that necessitate takfīr and just one facet that prevents takfīr, it is necessary for the muftī and the judge to lean towards this facet and [they] should avoid takfīr; because it is necessary to have a good opinion of a Muslim. Yes, if the intention of the person who uttered the statement was according to the possible interpretation that prevents takfīr, he certainly remains a Muslim; but if his intention was not this meaning, then there is no point in the muftī trying to interpret it favourably to avoid takfīr, neither will it benefit the accused.[69]

In *Baĥr ar-Rāyiq*, *Tanwīr al-Abṣār*, *Ĥadīqah al-Nadiyyah*, *Tanbīh al-Wulāt* and *Sall al-Ĥusām* etc.:

> The muftī who does not rule on the apostasy of a Muslim, so long as his statement can be interpreted favourably, has done well.[70]

Keller has also rightly pointed out in his article, that one cannot take everything written in books of fiqh and rule people kāfir indiscriminately:

> In some cases such a person is, and in some not. Many people today read an expression labelled in books of Islamic law as *kufr*, and when they realize that some Muslim they know or have heard of has an idea like it, they jump to the conclusion that he is a *kafir*.

Qārī mentions that a number of such statements are categorised as kufr in books of fiqh and fatāwā, such as insulting Abū Bakr ؓ and Úmar ؓ or rejecting their caliphate, or claiming that it is impossible to see Allāh táālā, or that the Qur'ān is created, etc. Yet, books of áqīdah stipulate that we cannot do takfīr of Ahl al-Qiblah. Explaining the reasons for this [apparent] ambiguity he writes:

> The aspect of discrepancy [*ishkāl*] here is the lack of agreement between derived rulings and the fundamental principle – which is generally accepted by theologians [*mutakallimīn*] that we should not do takfīr of Ahl al-Qiblah. This [apparent] ambiguity can be resolved thus: [opinions] transmitted in books of fatāwā together with the absence of any mention of the utterer [lack of knowledge about who said it] and the absence of any evidence for such a ruling, is insufficient evidence [for the transmitter's opinion]. Because the basis for creedal matters is absolute proof, because anathematising a Muslim has the potential for damages and abuses, big and small; therefore we cannot rule people kāfir based on someone's opinion; indeed, they have mentioned such things as kufr to forewarn and caution people.[71]

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68 *Sharĥ Fiqh al-Akbar*, Objective: On Knowing what Constitutes Apostasy, p445 [Ghāwujī Edition].

[69] *Khulāṣatu'l Fatāwā*, On Words of Apostasy: The Second Section 4/382.

[70] *Durr al-Mukhtār*, On Apostates, 1/356.

[71] *Sharĥ Fiqh al-Akbar*, p229.

Is Takfīr Absolutely Disallowed?

At the same time, it is not difficult for a person to renege from Islām; neither does it mean that regardless of what a person says, takfīr is disallowed. Álī al-Qārī says:

> Concerning the statement, "We do not do takfir of *Ahl al-Qiblah*," it is not absolute, as I have explained in the commentary of *Fiqh al-Akbar*.[72]

And in *Sharĥ Fiqh al-Akbar,* he says:

> Know, that by Ahl al-Qiblah, we mean those people who agree upon Essentials of faith such as: the universe is an accident, bodies will be resurrected and gathered on Judgement day, Knowledge of Allāh táālā encompasses everything – the parts and the whole, and all such things. Even if a person spends his entire life in worship and doing good deeds [together] with the belief that the universe is pre-eternal, or denies resurrection, or denies that Allāh táālā has knowledge of everything, or that He does not know the specifics; such a person will not be included among the Ahl al-Qiblah.
>
> According to Ahl as-Sunnah, the statement: "We do not do takfīr of Ahl al-Qiblah" means that we should not do takfīr of a person, until any indication or sign of kufr is found; or until the person has not said or done something that necessitates takfīr.[73]

When an essential aspect of faith is repudiated, and necessitates takfīr, the muftī shall issue the fatwā of kufr. Statements and situations are not always clear and objective; more often than not, such matters fall in a grey area, open to interpretation and thus become contentious issues. Regardless, everybody agrees that there are conditions and situations where takfīr is unavoidable. When somebody knowingly utters words that are kufr, he becomes a kāfir even if he does not believe in it. Álī al-Qārī says:

> You should also know, when a person utters words of kufr knowing what they mean, [even] without professing that belief, and says it without compulsion, and of his own free choice, such a person will be ruled kāfir. This is based on the preferred opinion of some scholars who said that faith is a composite of attestation and acceptance [*taşdīq wa'l iqrār*] – and by uttering such words, the person has changed acceptance to repudiation.[74]
>
> …a group of scholars have said: "We do not make takfīr of anybody among Ahl al-Qiblah." This negation is generic, together with the knowledge that among people of Qiblah are the hypocrites who disbelieve in the Book, the Sunnah and consensus with far more vehemence than Jews and Christians.

Ibn Humām says mentioning the disagreement among scholars concerning takfīr of Khawārij:

> In the discourse of madh'habs[75] a number of things are proscribed as kufr and takfīr is [also] mentioned, but it is not found in the speech of jurists who are mujtahids; [rather, such takfīr is mostly] in the utterance of non-jurists[76] and the opinion of those who are not jurists is inconsequential; the opinion of mujtahids is what we have mentioned [earlier]…[77]

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[72] *Sharĥ al-Shifā,* Cf. *Mútamad*, 214.

[73] *Sharĥ Fiqh al-Akbar*, p230.

[74] *Sharĥ Fiqh al-Akbar*, p244.

[75] *ahl al-madhāhib.*

[76] Mostly followers who cite opinions of mujtahids.

[77] *Fat'ĥ al-Qadīr*,6/93.

Bābartī explaining Ţaĥāwī's principle "*We do not make takfīr of Ahl al-Qiblah...*"[78] says:

> Following the hadith of RasūlAllāh ﷺ: ***Do not make takfīr of those who pray facing your qiblah.*** Ahl al-Qiblah here, refers to those who pray facing the Kábah and also attest to everything that is brought by the Prophet ﷺ. It is therefore, the author has said earlier: "Those who accept our qiblah will be considered as Muslims as long as they are steadfast and acknowledge everything brought by the Prophet ﷺ."[79] Which implies that the fanatical and extremist Rāfiđīs are not included in [Ahl al-Qiblah] even if they pray facing our qiblah.[80]

Takfīr of Ahl al-Bidáh and Ahl al-Ta'wīl

The primary reason for dissenting sects in Islām and heresies – or bidáh in belief – is because of wrong interpretation of Qur'ānic verses and ĥadīth. Some sects however went too far in their heresies and contradicted or rejected fundamental precepts, thereby going out of the pale of Islām. Other heretics professed beliefs which are classified as kufr, but jurists and theologians debated whether such a person has indeed become a kāfir. This difference will be mentioned in brief, the gist of which is that we do not make takfīr of those who hold a belief termed as kufr, as long as their belief is based on textual evidence which has been misinterpreted or misunderstood; and as long as such a belief does not contradict essential precepts. Imām Fađl al-Rasūl quotes Imām Birgivi from *Ţarīqah al-Muĥammadiyyah*:

> The words *bidáh*, *mubtadiý*, *hawā*, *ahl al-ahwā,* when used absolutely [usually] denote bidáh or innovation in belief. Some such heresies [bidáh] are kufr and some others are not kufr but are enormities. [Such an enormity] is far more repugnant than the biggest sin – even murder or adultery; and only kufr is next to such a bidáh. No excuses citing mistake of interpretation will be admissible in this case, unlike ijtihād in extraneous actions; the opposite of this bidáh is the belief of Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l Jamāáh.[81]

Citing *Sharĥ al-Maqāşid* he says:

> The ruling concerning a mubtadiý is that he is despised and repudiated; refuted and ostracised; he shall be humiliated, vehemently criticised and castigated; praying behind him is disliked.[82]

Citing Imām Ghazālī, he says:

> In *Iĥyā'a*, Imām Ghazālī talks of two kinds of people opposed to Sunni Muslims in áqīdah: the kāfir and the *mubtadiý*. After discussing kāfirs, he talks of heretics [*mubtadiý*] being two kinds: the proselytising mubtadiý and the passive mubtadiý whose reticence is either voluntary or due to his being disempowered...
>
> ...concerning the mubtadiý who actively promotes his bidáh; if his heresy is disbelief, he shall be dealt with, far more severely than a dhimmi[83] because he [the former] does not pay jizyah, nor will he be allowed to be categorised as a dhimmi. But if the mubtadiý is such that we do not consider him an apostate, the matter is between him and his Lord; though obviously, it is lesser in gravity than of a kāfir. However, we shall refute him [the heretic] far more strongly than [an original] disbeliever because the kāfir's mischief is not invasive; Muslims

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[78] *Áqīdah al-Taĥāwiyyah*, #57.

[79] Ibid. #54.

[80] Akmaluddīn Muĥammad al-Bābartī, *Sharĥ al-Ţaĥāwīyyah*, p102.

[81] Imām Birgivi, *Ţarīqah al-Muĥammadiyyah,* p9 and Cf. *Mútaqad*, p218.

[82] Prohibitively disliked in the Ĥanafī madh'hab: *makrūh taĥrīmī.*

[83] A *dhimmi* who actively promotes his religion.

know and identify it as kufr, and will normally, not incline towards it. But [the *mubtadiý*] claims that his [heretical] belief is the true form of Islām. Such a *mubtadiý* is the cause for corrupting beliefs of people and his mischief is intrusive. Therefore it is expedient to expose his hatred and his enmity [of Ahl as-Sunnah] and to boycott him and deplore him; to refute his heresy and to make people aware of it so they can shun him...[84]

Fakhr al-Islām reports Imām Abū Yūsuf as saying:

I discussed with Abū Ĥanīfah, the issue of [those who believe] the Qur'ān is created; and we both agreed that a person who says that the Qur'ān is created, is a kāfir.[85]

We are dealing with three important points in this discussion.

1. Heresy may or may not be kufr;
2. When heresy is kufr, it may be due to misinterpretation of scriptures;
3. A person professing a heretical belief may not become a kāfir even if the belief is kufr in itself.

The first point has been explained above and the third point is explained by Alahazrat thus:

The well-researched position is what we have mentioned many times: the difference between kufr and ikfār; something being kufr and ruling someone a kāfir because of it. It is kufr near Allāh táālā when belying or mocking [religion] is established [near Allāh táālā] and this does not require evidence at all, let alone absolute proof or evidence that Essential precepts [has been denied].[86]

However, it is not permissible to issue a ruling of kufr [ikfār] until we have absolute proof that he has belied or mocked the religion; and absolute evidence is not required, except in Essentials; because, one can contest non-essential precepts and say: "I do not have proof for this." But if one acknowledges the proof, and then refuses to accept it – it is [a form of] belying. In such a case, there is no reason to withhold or tarry in issuing the ruling of kufr, because the basis for takfīr is [now] clearly known...[87]

This leaves us with the second point: takfīr of heresies on account of misinterpretation:

And based on these two principles, there is a difference of opinion concerning the takfir of those [who err] in interpretation. The accurate position is to abstain from takfir and to consider them as Muslims – however, they shall be censured severely and harshly reproached until they retract from their heresy.

Thus it has been from the time of the Ṣaĥābah and Tābiýīn concerning those who deviated on Destiny, upon the opinions of Khawārij and the Mútazilah – they were not stopped from being buried in the graveyard, nor was their estate denied for inheritance. But they were proscribed; [and Muslims] forsook speaking to them, saluting them, meeting with them or eating with them; [authorities] reprimanded them by having them lashed, and exiled or imprisoned, to stem their heresies; and their leaders, who were arrogant and obstinate were executed.[88]

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[84] Cf. *Mútaqad*, p221.

[85] *Sharĥ Fiqh al-Akbar*, p41.

[86] If a man mocks or belies any sacred symbol or person, the person becomes kāfir near Allāh táālā even if we do not have evidence to rule such a person kāfir.

[87] *Mustanad al-Mútamad*, Footnote #357, p214.

[88] *Mútaqad*, p51.

It must be noted that heresies fall into different categories, and some categories are indeed kufr – which merit takfīr. Álī al-Qārī says:

> "***When you see those who engage in vain talk about our verses..***" meaning false interpretations and absurd descriptions; "***then, turn away from them, until they talk about something else.***"[89] The implications of this verse includes them,[90] because [meanings are] dependent on the general basis [of verses] not on etymological complexities involving those words. Erroneous interpretations and vapid distortions can be varyingly classified as kufr/disbelief, fisq/transgression, a sin or merely a mistake; and a mistake in this issue is neither excusable nor ignored, contrary to mistakes in secondary[91] issues, where mistakes are not penalised – rather, even mistakes merit reward in such issues.[92]

Qāđī Íyāđ, in his *Shifā* has discussed the disagreement among elder scholars concerning takfīr of a heretic whose belief or action is based on misinterpretation or misunderstood texts; he listed a number of examples and illustrations on things that cause takfīr.[93] We can summarise the positions concerning takfīr of heretics and misinterpreters as follows:

1. If a person professes a heretical belief which contradicts Essentials, he becomes a kāfir and no explanation will be entertained.

2. If a person professes a heretical belief which contradicts things for which there is absolute evidence [*dalīl qaṭýī*], jurists and some theologians have ruled him kāfir; but most theologians insisted that such denial is not kufr and only denying Essentials causes kufr.

3. If a person says or does something which is classed as kufr, and does so based on mistaken understanding of texts, he shall not be ruled a kāfir.

4. We cannot rule them kāfir by analogy or implied meanings; only explicit and incontrovertible evidence will be required to make takfīr of heretics.

5. If a heretic has become a kāfir and this is established by incontrovertible evidence,[94] it is necessary to make takfīr of such a person and consider him a kāfir. If one hesitates or doubts that such a person has become a kāfir, he will also become a kāfir.[95]

6. It is necessary to believe that Christians and Jews are kāfirs; and necessary to believe that an apostate has abandoned Islām. Anyone who doubts in this or hesitates in calling them a kāfir will also become a kāfir.

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[89] Sūrah Anáām, 6:68. وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخُوضُونَ فِىٓ ءَايَٰتِنَا فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا۟ فِى حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِۦ

[90] Philosophers and rationalists, whose far fetched and fancy interpretations are being refuted by Álī al-Qārī here.

[91] *furū'ú.*

[92] *Sharĥ Fiqh al-Akbar*, p12.

[93] *ta'wīl, muta-awwil, ahl al-ta'wīl.* See *Shifā*, p388, Part Four – Chapter Three, *Taĥqīq al-Qawl fī Ikfār al-Muta'awwilīn.*

[94] *dalīl qātiý.*

[95] As we shall see further, this is based on denial of Essentials or specific issues such as blasphemy.

Dangers of Takfīr

We have mentioned earlier that RasūlAllāh ﷺ warned us against making takfīr heedlessly or needlessly. According to a famous Ĥadīth, if a person accuses his Muslim brother of kufr unjustly, he may become a kāfir himself. Therefore, it is necessary to refrain from accusing another Muslim of kufr unless there is evidence and facts have been well-researched and ascertained. If the statement or action can be interpreted favourably, we must withhold from takfīr. Qāđī Íyāđ says quoting Imām al-Ĥaramayn:

> ..because making a mistake in [*takfir*] is a great calamity; because including a kāfir or excluding a Muslim from the community are [acts] of great significance. Other researchers have said: It is necessary to abstain from making takfīr of those who err in interpretation [*ahl al-ta'wīl*] because that would make permissible [*ibāĥah*] the blood of those who pray and are monotheists, which is immensely dangerous.[96]

If a person calls a Muslim, a kāfir without any basis, it is as if he has termed Islām as kufr; thereby denigrating religion and hence becomes a kāfir.[97] In very famous Ĥadīth in *Bukhārī* and *Muslim*:[98]

> When a man calls his brother [Muslim] "O Kāfir," one of the two has become[99] [a kāfir]
>
> **إِذَا قَالَ الرَّجُلُ لِأَخِيهِ يَا كَافِرُ فَقَدْ بَاءَ بِهِ أَحَدُهُمَا**

We see this Ĥadīth being quoted often, even to prevent legitimate takfir. Everybody agrees that the Ĥadīth is a warning to stay away from reckless takfīr. Suppose a person makes takfīr of another based on some interpretation, even erroneous, the accuser will ***not*** become a kāfir automatically because, his takfīr has a basis, regardless of the accuracy of such basis. Scholars have said that if a person calls another Muslim as a kāfir, as a form of abuse or derision, the accuser has committed sin, but will not become a kāfir. In fact, the heading of this chapter in *Bukhārī* is: "*He who accuses his brother being a kāfir without any basis will take that accusation himself.*" Explaining this, Ibn Ĥajar says:

> Thus, he [Bukhārī] has restricted it to: a person who calls another kāfir without any basis.[100]

It is implicit that the basis may or may not be valid; even if the basis [ta'wīl] is invalid because of misunderstanding or misinterpretation, the accuser will not take the ruling of kufr. Áynī says:

> **[One of the two becomes a kāfir]**: takfīr returns to the accuser; because if his accusation is true, the accused is a kāfir; and if it is false, it will return to the accuser who will become a kāfir, because he considers a believer as a kāfir and faith as kufr...
>
> ...Khaţţābī said: one of them becomes a kāfir, if takfīr is done without any basis. Ibn Baţal said: [the accuser] takes the sin of accusing his brother of kufr[101]

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[96] *Shifā*, p388; the word is *Shifā'a*, but the name of the book has a shortened alif; Qārī says that it is meant to rhyme with Muşţafā.

[97] From Imām Rāfiýī's comment Cf. *Iýlām*, Haytamī, p6.

[98] Şaĥīĥ Bukhārī, #6103 and #6104, *Kitāb al-Adab*.

[99] The phrase *bā'a bihi* means 'comes back with' [*Dībāj, Ikmāl*]; idiomatically it can also be translated as: "one of the two goes out of Islām" or "one of the two returns with kufr upon him" and as Suyūţī says: "He returns with kufr".

[100] *Fat'ĥ al-Bārī*, 13/679.

[101] *Úmdatu'l Qārī*, 15/246.

Explaining the title of the topic of this Ĥadīth, Áynī says:

> If one has a basis for the takfīr of another, he has a valid excuse and will not be a sinner. It is therefore, that RasūlAllāh ﷺ exempted Úmar ؓ when he accused Ĥātib ibn Baltaáh of being a hypocrite based on his interpretation...[102]

Ibn Ĥajar al-Haytami mentions the following Ĥadīth in *Iýlām*:[103]

1. Muslim reports: When a man calls his brother a kāfir, one of two has become a kāfir.
2. [Muslim] in another report: Whoever calls his brother: "O kāfir," one of them has become [kāfir]; if it is truly the case [the accused is kāfir], if not [takfir] returns to the accuser.
3. [Muslim] in another report: If a person knowingly attributes himself to another man as his father, he has committed kufr; if a man calls another a kāfir or says: "Enemy of Allāh," and if the accused is not so, kufr rebounds upon the accuser.
4. We have mentioned Abū Áwānah's report earlier: If the person is as was accused [he is a kāfir], if not, [the accuser] will become kāfir.
5. In another narration: If a man calls his brother a kāfir, kufr becomes binding upon one of them.

Haytami explains:

> ..making takfīr of his brother means that he attributes him with disbelief either as a statement such as: "You are a Kāfir" or as an invocation: "O Kāfir!" or believes that he has become a kāfir, similar to Khawārij who make takfīr of Muslims for committing sin.[104]

Even though a number of Ĥadīth mention that 'one of them loses his faith,' there is almost a unanimous agreement[105] among Muslim scholars that it should not be taken literally. Indeed, it is a grave sin and the risk of losing one's own faith is also real; yet, the ruling will be similar to other Ĥadīth where a certain action is termed kufr, but interpreted as 'having acted like a disbeliever.' For example, a Ĥadīth says that a person becomes kāfir if he deliberately misses an obligatory prayer – scholars said that such a person has become closer to kufr and not a kāfir.[106] Imām Ghazālī explaining this has said in his *Iĥyā'a*:

> This is about a person who accuses another of kufr with full knowledge that [the accused] is a Muslim, then [the accuser] will become a kāfir; but if he accuses another presuming that he has become a kāfir because of his bidáh, etc., [the accuser] is mistaken, and will not become kāfir.[107]

Haytami notes that some scholars have said that the Ĥadīth can be taken literally and therefore the person who accuses another of kufr unjustly will become a kāfir; quoting Ibn Daqīq al-Ýīd, he says:

> "When a person accuses another of kufr, and if it is not true, kufr will rebound upon the accuser." Ĥāra means it rebounds; this is a grave warning to those who accuse Muslims of having become kāfir, when it is not the

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[102] Ibid., 245.

[103] The following Ĥadīth are found in *Ṣaĥīĥ Muslim*, 1/111, 112 and *Musnad Abi Áwānah*, #50, #53.

[104] *Iýlām*, p9.

[105] Keller has also mentioned this opinion in endnote #1.

[106] Paraphrased from Suyūṭī's *Dībāj*, 1/82.

[107] Cf. *Iýlām*, p11. *Iĥyā'a*.

> case. This is a great calamity, afflicting a number of scholars who differed on creedal matters and made takfīr of each other…

The summary of Imām Nawawī's explanation[108] of this ĥadīth: This is one of the ĥadīth scholars have categorised as problematic, as it cannot be taken literally, because the creed of Ahl as-Sunnah is that we do not anathematise a sinner – we do not make takfīr for committing sins like murder, adultery etc. So also, when a person calls his brother [Muslim] a kāfir, when he does not consider the religion of Islām as false, he will not become a kāfir. There are a number of explanations for this ĥadīth. The first is that it refers to a person who considers it permissible to call a Muslim as kāfir; the second is that the accuser returns with the sin of calling another a kāfir; the third is that it refers to Khawārij, who make takfīr of believers; the fourth is that it takes a person closer to kufr, and it is feared that a person who indulges in takfīr often may suffer a gruesome ending; the fifth is that it is not kufr in reality that returns, but only takfīr – that is a person has effectively made takfīr of himself.

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Khawārij and Takfīr

The Khawārij were foremost in making takfīr and they even went to the extent of making takfīr of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ. Some of them made takfīr of prominent companions like Mawlā Álī ؓ. On the other hand, the fanatical Rāfiđīs made takfīr of all companions except some, like Mawlā Álī ؓ and others. According to the Khawārij, a person becomes a kāfir if he commits a sin – which is refuted in every book of Sunni creed and theology. Concerning Khawārij, Ibn Humām says in *Fat'ĥ al-Qadīr*:

> …and these people known as Khawārij, who make permissible the blood and wealth of Muslims and enslave their women;[109] and anathematise companions of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ. The majority of jurists and ĥadīth scholars have said that they take the ruling of rebels. However, according to Mālik, they will be forced to repent, if they do not repent, they will be executed – not as apostates, but to end their insurrection. Some ĥadīth scholars opined that they are apostates and that they shall be dealt as apostates because of the ĥadīth: "***A group of people will appear in final days, young in years and foolish minds, they speak of the Qur'ān,***[110] ***but the Qur'ān does not go beyond their gullets. They will renege from religion, [exiting] just as an arrow is shot from a bow. Execute them wherever you find them***[111] ***because, for those who slay them, there shall be a great reward on the day of Judgement.***"
>
> …Ibn al-Mundhir said "I do not know anyone who agreed with ĥadīth scholars who anathematised the Khawārij," which implies a consensus of jurists.[112]

The tribulation of the original Khawārij died centuries ago and was resurrected by the Wahābīs in modern times as Keller notes:

> It is the fitna or "strife" that destroyed previous faiths, and whose fire in Islamic times was put out with the defeat of the Kharijites, only to be revived on a wholesale scale almost a thousand years later by Wahhabi sect of Arabia in the eighteenth century

[109] By considering their husbands as apostates.

[110] Lit. "talk of the most righteous speech in the world," Qur'ān as described in the previous ĥadīth of Abū Saýīd [*Fat'ĥ al-Bārī*].

[111] This is an instruction to rulers as in all cases of punishments. Only a ruler or his authorised representative can enforce such laws and punishments meted after due process. It is not permissible for individuals to take the law in their own hands.

[112] We do not make takfīr of Khawārij. *Fat'ĥ al-Qadīr*,6/93.

Imām Ibn Áābidīn writes about the Wahābīs:

> ...as it has come to pass in our times among the followers of [ibn] Ábd al-Wahhāb, who rose from Najd and invaded the Ĥaramayn; they claim to follow the Ĥanbalī madh'hab, but they believe that only they are true Muslims, and those who differ from their creed are polytheists. Based on this [principle of takfīr] they consider killing of Ahl as-Sunnah and their scholars as permissible; [thus they were] until their force was shattered by [the Grace of] Allāh táālā and their cities were plundered, and Muslim armies triumphed over them in the year 1233 AH.[113]

Ĥadīth scholars considered Khawārij as kāfirs because they made takfīr of prominent companions and according to the literal interpretation of ĥadīth mentioned above, takfīr returns to the Khawārij. However, the majority of scholars abstained from anathematising Khawārij because, their takfīr is based on erroneous interpretation. Indeed, if any of them denies that Abū Bakr al-Şiddīq ﷺ was a companion or makes [absolute] takfīr of companions, or considers the entire ummah to be misguided, such a person will be ruled a kāfir as he rejects a fundamental precept of religion.

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Examples of Disbelief

It is disbelief to say anything that explicitly denies the Oneness of Allāh táālā [tawĥīd] or that He is the Lord and Creator – worshipping anybody or anything other than Allāh táālā. [Kafirs are] deniers of God like the Atheists, the Dualists like the Dīşāniyyah, Mānūniyyah, the Sabians, Christians, Magians, idol worshippers, or Angel and Satan worshippers, those who worship the sun, the stars, fire or any of the idol worshippers among polytheists of Arabia, India, China, Sudan; similarly the Qarāmites, the Baţinīs, those who believe in transmigration of souls, the Rāfiđī who believes that Álī ﷺ is god or claims that the Qur'ān is incomplete, or denies that Abū Bakr ﷺ is a companion; or those who claim a son for the Lord Almighty; or those who believe that the universe is pre-eternal or shall abide without annihilation; or insults Allāh táālā or blasphemes against the Prophet ﷺ.[114] Rulings concerning an apostate cover the following major areas: punishment, repentance, boycott, marriage, funeral, burial and inheritance.

> Islam will be presented to the apostate for clemency and it is not obligatory. This is what Mālik, Shāfiýī and Aĥmad have said – and an attempt will be made to clarify the doubts of the apostate. If he wants more time to consider, he will be given three days [in prison] and if he repents, [he will be set free] else, he will be executed.
>
> ...according to Imām Abū Ĥanīfah, it is recommended that he be left alone for three days irrespective of his asking for time or not.[115]

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[113] *Radd al-Muĥtār*, 6/413.

[114] See Appendices E and F for a more detailed listing of things that cause kufr.

[115] *Sharĥ Fiqh al-Akbar*, p245.

An apostate will be given a chance to repent;[116] if he has lingering doubts about Islām or its commandments, they will be clarified. If he is still adamant on his kufr, he will be executed. All scholars agree that the repentance of an apostate will be accepted except in the case of a blasphemer, where there is a difference of opinion. The apostate will be excommunicated from the community and he[117] cannot marry a Muslim; and when he dies, according to some scholars, his inheritance will be distributed among his Muslim inheritors; however, an apostate cannot inherit from anybody. Muslims will refuse to greet him, speak to him and deal with him. He shall be a social outcast. If he dies, no funeral prayers will be held for him and his corpse will not be allowed to be buried in the graveyard of Muslims. We conclude this chapter with commonly mentioned precepts and provisions [*masāyil*] in books of fiqh and fatāwā concerning apostasy and takfīr:[118]

1. If, in a specific issue, there can be many interpretations; and all possibilities necessitate takfīr, except one interpretation which prevents takfīr, it is obligatory for the muftī to incline towards that which prevents takfīr. This is because we should have a good opinion of Muslims.

2. However, if the person's intention was to mean that which necessitates takfīr, the muftī's consideration will not benefit him; he shall be ordered to repent and renew his marriage.

3. If someone utters a word of kufr voluntarily, in the full knowledge that it is kufr and believes it to be kufr – he has committed kufr.

4. If he does not believe in it, or if he does not know that uttering such words necessitates kufr, but yet he uttered it knowingly – most scholars ruled him a kāfir and did not accept ignorance as a valid excuse.

5. However, some scholars have said that if an ignorant person utters words that are kufr and does not know that such words are kufr, the person will be excused for his ignorance.[119]

6. If something is said unintentionally – or by the slip of tongue; for example, he wanted to say: "there is no other God but Allāh" and he unthinkingly said: "there are other Gods with Allāh," or if he wanted to say: "O Allāh! You are my Lord and I am your slave," but muddled it up and said: "O Allāh! You are my slave and I am your Lord." In both cases, the person will not be ruled kāfir.

7. Similarly, if one wanted to say: "I eat stew" but stumbled and said: "I disbelieve," he will not be ruled a kāfir.

8. The basic response concerning an issue that is open for interpretation is that none should be ruled kāfir in such a case; because takfīr is the most extreme form of reproach, and the most serious of all crimes; and whenever there is a possibility to interpret favourably, takfīr will be avoided.

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[116] Some scholars said that the period is indefinite as long as there is hope for him to repent; some others said that he would be given three days to repent, else executed. Qādī Íyād says that Imām Abū Ĥanīfah and others have mentioned three periods – days, weeks or months – and the person is given a chance to repent. Scholars have agreed that in this period the apostate is imprisoned but is not beaten; he shall be given food and drink, but is warned of the impending execution if he does not repent.

[117] This applies to women too – except that Ĥanafīs exempt a female apostate from execution.

[118] *Fatāwā Tātārkhāniyyah* 5/312; *Radd al-Muĥtār* 4/405; *Baĥr ar-Rāyiq* 5/194; Fatāwā al-Hindiyyah; *Fat'ĥ al-Qadīr*, 6/64; *Badāyiý al-Ṣanāyiý*; *Bināyah*; *Fiqh al-Islāmī wa Adillatuh* 6/183; *Fiqhu álā Madhāhib al-Arbáah*; *Dhakhīrah* 12/13; *Dusūqī álā Sharĥ al-Kabīr li Dardīr*; *Tuĥfatu'l Muĥtāj* 9/79; *Kitāb al-Furūú* 10/186; *Iqnāá* 4/285.

[119] When such things are not from Essentials of faith; the excuse of ignorance is absolutely inadmissible in case of Essentials.

9. It is necessary for a scholar to not hasten in issuing the verdict of kufr.

10. If one conceals kufr or contemplates [committing] disbelief, he becomes a kāfir regardless of his current state.

11. If one utters kufr willingly, he becomes a kāfir, even if he is convinced and unperturbed about Islām in his heart. In this case, Islām in his heart will not avail him.[120]

12. If a person says "If such and such a thing happens tomorrow, I will become a kāfir," he becomes a kāfir from that very moment.[121]

13. If one decides to become a kāfir in the future, even if it is a hundred years later, he becomes a kāfir instantly.

14. If a person tells another "Don't say such a thing, because it will make you a kāfir" and the other replies "So what? Let me become a kāfir," the latter becomes a kāfir because he is pleased with kufr.

15. If one decides to order another person to commit kufr, this person will also become a kāfir.

16. If a person has disturbing thoughts or notions that are certainly kufr if he utters them, and he dislikes such thoughts and abhors such notions – these vile thoughts will not harm him. In fact this is an strong indication of faith.[122]

17. If one utters kufr to make others laugh, those who laugh will become kāfir; except when it is involuntary – for example when it is very funny and one cannot help laughing. The basis here is that one should not laugh approvingly, as approval of kufr is also kufr.

18. If one utters words of kufr citing another, it is not kufr if the citation is meant for a valid purpose such as witness or asking for fatwā, or warning Muslims of the person uttering such kufr; but if it is said in mirth and in an approving manner, it is kufr.

19. If a preacher says something which is kufr,[123] and the community approves of it, the whole community becomes kāfir.

20. If a person is pleased with kufr himself, he becomes a kāfir; however, if he is pleased with kufr of another person, scholars have differed, some have ruled him a kāfir some have not. The summary is, if it is for a reason such as worldly benefit or jealousy etc., he is not ruled kāfir; but if it is because he approves of kufr, he becomes a kāfir.

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[120] Movie actors, for example, do all kinds of antics and claim that Islām is in their hearts, and they are only acting and saying something which they do not really believe in their hearts. Similarly, some people tell blasphemous jokes; and when they are reproached, they justify their actions claiming Islām is firm in their hearts. We seek Allāh's refuge from all kinds of kufr.

[121] Therefore one should not debate with kafirs with the condition such as: "I will become a Christian if you convince me." Such a condition is ĥarām, when it is said rhetorically; but if he intends to become a Christian, he becomes a kāfir immediately.

[122] *Waswasah*: whispering of the Devil and wild thoughts are exempt as long as one does not say them aloud or act upon such instigations.

[123] Things which are obviously kufr, because things that are open for interpretation will be investigated and a verdict will be given by scholars on such disputes.

21. If one prays: "May Allāh táālā give you death on kufr" or "May Allāh take away your Īmān," it won't make him kāfir [as it could be in anger, hatred etc] unless he approves of kufr and dislikes faith.

22. If someone attributes Allāh táālā with things that are inappropriate, and another person approves of it, both become kāfir.

23. If one does or says something kufr under duress or threat to life or limb, he will not become a kāfir as long as Islām is firm in his heart, and he utters kufr only in fear. It is recommended though, not to utter kufr even out of fear.

24. If a person becomes an apostate, all his previous deeds are nullified according to Ĥanafīs; thus, he will have to do a Ĥajj once again if he has the means to do it; however, it is not necessary for him to repeat obligatory prayers and fasts. Shāfiýīs say that his deeds will be nullified only if he dies without repentance, and if he repents, it is not required for him to repeat his Ĥajj.

25. After apostasy, a person will not revert to Islām if he utters the *shahādah* merely repeating by habit. He will have to expressly repent from the utterance or deed that made him an apostate and explicitly renew his faith (and disavow the cause of his apostasy).

26. An apostate is practically expelled from the community: he cannot receive *zakāt*, he cannot marry a Muslim; when he dies, he will neither be washed, nor prayed upon, nor buried in the Muslim cemetery.

27. An apostate can neither inherit nor his inheritance disbursed (with varying cases and differences in madh'habs.

28. If he cohabits with his wife without renewing his faith, such a relationship is deemed adultery and children from such relations are considered illegitimate.

29. When a person becomes an apostate – man or woman, freeman or slave – Islām will be presented to them; if they accept and renew their faith, they will be released, or else they will be executed. However, in the Ĥanafī madh'hab the apostate woman will not be executed.

30. If a person becomes an apostate, repents and becomes a muslim; and then becomes an apostate again for a number of times – the majority of scholars [and Ĥanafīs included] ruled that he will be tolerated for three times and the fourth time he becomes an apostate, he will be executed forthwith without any remission.

Advice: one should recite this duáā every morning and night: "My Lord! I seek your refuge from committing polytheism knowingly, and I seek your forgiveness from that which I do unknowingly."[124]

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ رَحْمَةً ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ الْوَهَّابُ

[124] Bukhārī in *Adab al-Mufrad*:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أُشْرِكَ بِكَ وَ أَنَا أَعْلَمُ، وَأَسْتَغْفِرُكَ لِمَا لَا أَعْلَمُ

III. BLASPHEMY AND ISLAMIC LAW

Allāh táālā guided us through His Messenger ﷺ, and it is because of him that mankind has come out of darkness into light. It is because of him that we are blessed in this world and in the hereafter. His ﷺ station near Allāh táālā is higher than we can probably imagine; he ﷺ is the most beloved to Allāh táālā in the creation. Allāh táālā commanded us to love and respect him – indeed, loving the Prophet ﷺ is the basis of faith and one cannot be a complete Muslim until he loves the Prophet ﷺ more than he loves his own parents, his children and everything else in the creation.

> O Messenger! Verily, We have sent you as a witness, a bringer of glad tidings and a warner [of punishment]. So that, [O people] you may believe in Allāh and His messenger; and that you revere him and respect him, and that you sanctify your Lord in the morning and evening.[125]

إِنَّآ أَرۡسَلۡنَٰكَ شَٰهِدٗا وَمُبَشِّرٗا وَنَذِيرٗا ٨ لِّتُؤۡمِنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَتُعَزِّرُوهُ وَتُوَقِّرُوهُ وَتُسَبِّحُوهُ بُكۡرَةٗ وَأَصِيلًا ٩

Allāh táālā forbade us to hurt the Prophet ﷺ; Muslims from the time of the companions have agreed unanimously concerning one who denigrates or disrespects the Prophet ﷺ: such a person is an apostate and shall be executed. Hurting the Prophet ﷺ invites the Wrath of Allāh táālā:

> And those who hurt the Messenger of Allāh, for them is a painful punishment [126]

وَٱلَّذِينَ يُؤۡذُونَ رَسُولَ ٱللَّهِ لَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

> Verily, those who hurt Allāh and His Messenger; Allāh has damned them in this world and the hereafter; and readied for them a humiliating punishment.[127]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤۡذُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ لَعَنَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِي ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمۡ عَذَابٗا مُّهِينٗا

When the Jews of Madīnah used innuendos in addressing the Prophet ﷺ, Muslims were forbidden to use such words because of ugly meanings,[128] and thus disrespectful to the Prophet ﷺ. Allāh táālā has Himself refuted and repelled attacks upon His beloved Prophet ﷺ in the Qur'ān and He is a sufficient Protector. It is necessary for us to support our Prophet ﷺ by every means possible – expending our lives and property to defend his ﷺ honour from every debased wretch who attempts to besmirch it; the least we can do to fulfil his ﷺ right upon us is to speak out against such blasphemers, and those in power and authority should have them executed.

Imām Subki says:

> I do not have the power to avenge the accursed blasphemer myself – but Allāh táālā knows that my heart despises him; yet, it is not sufficient to merely consider it evil in the heart; rather, it is incumbent upon me to strive as much as I can with my tongue and my pen. I beseech Allāh táālā to not reprimand me for the paucity

[125] Sūrah Fatĥ, 48:8-9

[126] Sūrah Tawbah, 9:61.

[127] Sūrah Aĥzāb, 33:57.

[128] Obviously, when Muslims used those words, they never intended to insult the Prophet ﷺ, yet they were forbidden to use words which could also be used as innuendos; therefore, intention to insult is not a valid excuse in the case of blasphemy.

> of my response and that He [still] grants me salvation which He grants those who forbid from evil; verily, He is Oft-Forgiving, the Pardoner.[129]

Ibn Taymiyyah has said:

> This is the least that we can do to fulfil his ﷺ right upon us – rather, Allāh táālā has made it obligatory upon us to respect him ﷺ, to aid his cause in every possible way and to sacrifice our lives and property at every juncture, defending his honour from every scoundrel seeking to hurt it. Although, Allāh táālā has made His Messenger free from being dependent on the creation for assistance, he tests us to differentiate who amongst us will stand up to support him and who does not...[130]

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What is Blasphemy?

Blasphemy is a special case of apostasy. Insulting, mocking or disrespecting Allāh táālā or His prophets; especially, the final Prophet, our master Muĥammad ﷺ are all forms of blasphemy. In this chapter we discuss blasphemy against the Prophet Muĥammad ﷺ and consequences of such blasphemy. This is a very important topic discussed in considerable detail by Islamic jurists; prominent scholars have written dedicated books on this topic, the summary of which can be found in Qāđī Íyāđ's statement:

> Whoever insults the Prophet ﷺ or criticises him or discredits him, or alleges that he had a flaw or fault in his person, or his ancestry, or his religion, or his attributes; or poses an objection to disparage or denigrate him or attempts to diminish his lofty stature, or slights him or speaks lightly of him, or malign him is a blasphemer.
>
> Such a person shall be executed – without any exception – or without any argument whether such insults are explicit or implied, which we shall discuss further. Similarly, anybody who curses him, or imprecates him, or wishes him harm, or attributes things to him which do not befit his elevated rank by way of ridiculing him or mocking him – or hurls profanities at him or refers to him in obscene language or objectionable speech, or degrades him because of the trials he underwent or hardships he had to bear; or scorns him for certain human characteristics which are admissible for him: in all these cases [the person becomes a blasphemer] and it is unanimously agreed by all Muslims from the time of the companions until now and thus it shall continue.
>
> Abū Bakr ibn al-Mundhir said: "There is ijmāá that a blasphemer of the Prophet ﷺ shall be executed; and among those who held this opinion are Mālik ibn Anas, Layth, Aĥmad [ibn Ĥanbal], Is'ĥāq; and this is the madh'hab of Shāfiýī." [Qāđī Íyāđ says:] This is implied from what Abū Bakr as-Şiddīq ﷺ has said; and according to [all of] them the repentance of such a blasphemer is inadmissible. Abū Ĥanīfah and his companions, [Sufyān] al-Thawrī, Scholars of Kūfā, Awzāýī have also said similar to this, except that they have said that it is apostasy. Walīd ibn Muslim has also reported similarly from Mālik, Ţabarī reports the same from Abū Ĥanīfah and his companions about a person who disrespects the Prophet ﷺ or dissociates from him, or belies him.[131]

We shall summarise major issues, rulings and illustrations gleaned from four major books on the subject, and important citations; however, a detailed examination of the topic is beyond the scope of this book. The four books we shall mention are:

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[129] Imām Subkī, *Sayf al-Maslūl,* p114.

[130] Ĥāfiż Ibn Taymiyyah, *Şārim al-Maslūl,* p28.

[131] *Kitāb al-Shifā*, p355. Part Four, Chapter One.

- *Kitāb al-Shifā*, the final section by Qāđī Íyāđ al-Malikī
- *Şārim al-Maslūl álā Shātim al-Rasūl* by Ĥāfiż Ibn Taymiyyah al-Ĥanbalī[132]
- *Sayf al-Maslūl álā man Sabb al-Rasūl* by Imām Taqīyuddīn Álī al-Subkī al-Shāfiýī
- *Tanbīh al-Wulāt wa'l Ĥukkām álā Aĥkāmi Shātimi Khayr al-Anām* by Ibn Áābidīn al-Ĥanafī

Regardless of the blasphemer being a Muslim or a disbeliever, blasphemy of the Prophet ﷺ is punishable by death. There is a unanimous agreement of all Muslims from the time of the companions, that a blasphemer should be executed. The Mālikīs and Ĥanbalīs do not accept, nor requisition repentance of the blasphemer – whereas, the Shāfiýīs and Ĥanafis[133] accept his repentance; and in case of [blasphemy of] a disbeliever, his conversion to Islām is mandatory for repentance and to save him from the gallows. According to some scholars, after his execution his property will be distributed among his Muslim inheritors; others opined that it will not be distributed and will be given to the common fund of Muslims. It should be emphasised that in all cases of punishments, only a Muslim ruler vested with the authority to impose sharīáh can administer such punishments and executions, after due process of law. Individuals cannot and should not take the law in their own hands. It should also be noted that even though blasphemy is a case of apostasy, certain rulings differ from general cases of apostasy – such as accepting the repentance and apostasy of womenfolk. Generally, Ĥanafis do not make it mandatory to execute women because of apostasy, except in the case of blasphemy. Ibn Nujaym, the Ĥanafī imām says:

> The ruling is the same concerning apostasy regardless of the cause, except in a few [special] cases. The first case is blasphemy of the Prophet ﷺ. In *Fat'ĥ al-Qadīr*: "Anyone who dislikes the Prophet ﷺ in his heart is an apostate, and blasphemy is worse.[134] According to Ĥanafīs, he will be executed as statutory punishment[135] and his repentance is not accepted to save him from the gallows. It is said that it is the madh'hab of the Kūfan scholars and Mālik. It is reported from Abū Bakr as-Şiddīq ؓ: It makes no difference whether someone reports that he has repented or he announces it himself, unlike any other form of apostasy.[136]

Ibn Taymiyyah says:

> …as Abū Bakr as-Şiddīq ؓ wrote: "The punishment for [blaspheming] Prophets does not resemble other statutory punishments; whosoever does it – that is, commits blasphemy against Prophets – if he is a Muslim,

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[132] He is considered as a relied upon authority in the Ĥanbalī madh'hab and Deobandis/Salafis hold him in high esteem; besides, Imām Subkī commended the book even though he disagreed with some of its opinions, as he writes:

> I have seen the book written by Abu'l Ábbās Aĥmed ibn Ábd al-Ĥalīm ibn Ábd al-Salām ibn Taymiyyah, which he named, *As-Şārim al-Maslūl álā Shātim al-Rasūl* and he has described twenty-seven proofs for the execution of a blasphemer. He has described it in detail and described it well and has given extensive proofs from tradition, viewpoints [of scholars] and implications derived from evidence [and the entire book is one volume]. However, in my heart, I am not convinced with his opinion that execution is mandatory even after the blasphemer reverts to Islām. Yet, this is a debatable point – and if a scholar is convinced of its veracity, there is no harm in his choosing the opinion he is convinced with; the basis of leading or following [*ijtihād-taqlīd*] is based on the strength of conviction. [*Sayf al-Maslūl,* p387].

[133] There is a disagreement among Ĥanafī scholars; Bazzāzī and those who followed him did not accept repentance following the Ĥanbalīs and Mālikīs; and others did not agree with Bazzāzī as Ibn Áābidīn explains in *Tanbīh*.

[134] Because he openly shows his dislike opposed to the person who conceals it in his heart.

[135] *Ĥadd.*

[136] *Baĥr ar-Rāyiq*, 5/202.

he becomes an apostate; and if he is a disbeliever with a covenant, he becomes a warring disbeliever and a rebel. Rather, he is the most hostile of all disbelievers".[137]

Qāđī Íyāđ says:

> Saĥnūn[138] said concerning blasphemy of the Prophet ﷺ that it is apostasy similar to zandaqah;[139] it is because of this statement there is a difference of opinion concerning acceptance of a blasphemer's repentance and anathematisation; and whether he should be executed on account of statutory punishment [*ĥadd*] or apostasy?[140]

He explains that no scholar has disagreed that it is apostasy; those who said that the blasphemer is executed as *ĥadd* and not as an apostate, is only when such a person is not obdurate about his statement deemed as blasphemy.

> The second opinion[141] is that [disrespect] is a proof of kufr and therefore [a blasphemer] will be executed as statutory punishment, even if he is not ruled an apostate; except when such a person is impenitent about his statement [of disrespect] and when he does not reject it nor discard it, such a person is [certainly a] kāfir.[142]

One of the oft-cited passages concerning this issue is the statement of Imām Muĥammad ibn Saĥnūn quoted by Qāđī Íyāđ:

> Muĥammad ibn Saĥnūn said that scholars are in unanimous agreement that the blasphemer of the Prophet ﷺ and his denigrator is an apostate. Allāh's promise of punishment for such a person is ordained. The punishment for such a person in our nation is execution. Whosoever doubts in his apostasy and that a blasphemer will be punished has himself become an apostate.[143]

Further he says:

> In *Mabsūţ*, a report from Úthmān ibn Kinānah says: Whoever insults the Prophet ﷺ among Muslims will be executed or crucified and his repentance will not be [requisitioned nor] accepted. The ruler can choose whatever is appropriate: whether to crucify or to execute.

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[137] *Ṣārim*, p299.

[138] Ábd al-Salām ibn Saýīd al-Tannūkhī [160-240 AH]. the author of *Mudawwanah*. Another quote from his son, Muĥammad ibn Suĥnūn [202-265 AH] follows shortly, which is also shown on the cover of this book. Ibn Ĥajar says that Saĥnūn is the nickname of the father. [See *Lisān al-Mīzān*, entries #3353 and #7089]. In a footnote in *Sayf al-Maslūl*, Shaykh Iyad Aĥmed al-Ghawj says that Saĥnūn is with a fat'ĥah according to Ibn Makki al-Ṣīqlī [d.501 AH] in his *Tathqīf al-Lisān*. Dhahabī says that Suĥnūn and Saĥnūn are both correct, and it is the name of a bird found in North-Western Africa [*Siyar* 12/68]. I have used Saĥnūn predominantly, but I may ocassionaly use the other spelling, subconsciously following the copy of *Shifā*, I usually refer [with the commentary of Shumunnī] which marks it as Suĥnūn.

[139] *Zandaqah*: Ibn Qarqūl said that a Zindīq is a person who is a freethinker; who does not believe in any of the well-known religions or well-known sects within a religion. It is also used to describe a person who rejects religion completely and religious laws [even if he is not an atheist]. The term is also used to describe those who claim to profess Islām outwardly, but secretly they hold beliefs that contradict Islām. Originally, it is a Persian word used to describe followers of Manichaeism and named [Mani's] book [*Āyīn e Mānī*] that he wrote invalidating [their religion]; it came into Arabic. [Shumunnī, *Muzīl al-Khafā*, 355 and Qārī in his commentary].

[140] *Shifā*, p356.

[141] Reported by Awzāýī, Thawrī, Imām Abū Ĥanīfah and others [Khafājī, *Nasīm ar-Riyād*].

[142] *Shifā*, p360.

[143] *Shifā*, p356.

> …we heard Mālik say: "Whoever insults the Prophet ﷺ or disrespects him or denigrates shall be executed, regardless whether such a person is Muslim or kāfir and his repentance will not be accepted at any cost.
>
> …Ibn Wahb reports from Mālik that he said: "Whoever says the mantle of the Prophet ﷺ was dirty, and he says this denigrating the Prophet ﷺ shall be executed."[144]

Similarly, Abu'l Ĥasan al-Qābisi ruled a person who described the Prophet ﷺ as a camel-driver and an orphan in the care of Abū Ţālib. Also, [Qāđī] Ibn Abī Zayd ordered the execution of a person who disrespected the Prophet ﷺ. People were discussing the attributes of the Prophet and an ugly person with a dishevelled beard passed by; the man said, 'Do you wish to know of his ﷺ attributes? They were the same as this passerby – in his face and his beard.' The Qāđī did not accept his repentance and said about the scoundrel: "may he be accursed, such a thing will not issue from the heart of a believer." Similarly, Abū Sulaymān, a companion of Saĥnūn said that whosoever says that the Prophet ﷺ was dark skinned will be executed. It is necessary to note that no interpretation will be accepted in explicit insults:

> Abū Sulayman reports about a person who was told: 'Don't you heed the right of the Messenger of Allāh?' The person said: "May Allāh do such and such things with the Messenger of Allāh," mentioning ugly things. He was told: "What are you barking about, you enemy of Allāh!" and the person said something worse than what he said before; and then he said: "By messenger of Allāh, I was referring to the scorpion." Abū Sulayman said: "I bear witness [have him executed] and I will have a share in your reward".[145]

Ĥabīb ibn Rabīý says that it was because these are explicit words – and [fancy] interpretations in explicit insults will not be admissible. Similarly, a person who said: "If I am asked and I am ignorant about it, then [What is so remarkable?] the Prophet ﷺ has also been asked [of things] and he was uninformed."[146] In *Muĥīţ* it is said that if one refers to a hair of the Prophet ﷺ as a 'bitsy whisker'[147] has committed kufr according to some, and others disagreed and said, he won't be ruled kāfir unless he has said that derogatively.[148] Another incident about the scholar Ibn Ĥātim al-Ţulayţulī is mentioned who was crucified when he was disrespectful to the Prophet ﷺ. In a debate, he [derogatively] referred to the Prophet ﷺ as an orphan and father-in-law of Álī;[149] and he claimed that the austerity and abstinence of the Prophet ﷺ was not voluntary and if he ﷺ could afford better things [in food and drink] he would have partaken of them. The jurists of Qayrawān and companions of Saĥnūn ordered the execution of Ibrāhīm al-Fazārīy who was a talented poet and a versatile scholar. He was accused of blasphemy against Allāh táālā, His prophets and also our Prophet ﷺ.

Qāđī Yaĥyā ibn Úmar tried him and [after proven guilty], he was sent to the gallows, killed by the sword and hung upside down [as a warning to others]. When his body was being brought down from the scaffold, it

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[144] Alahazrat was asked about this: "After all, it would get soiled due to wordly constraints." Alahazrat thundered: "Why doesn't he say that dust has found refuge in his ﷺ blessed mantle?" Nevertheless, if a person says this as mere information without the intention of denigrating the Prophet ﷺ, he will not become a kāfir, as is obvious.

[145] Ibid.

[146] The words used are *jahiltu – jahila*, which are explicit. I have translated *jahila* as 'he was uninformed'.

[147] Which may sound strange in translation, but in Arabic, the diminutive would be derogative.

[148] Cf. *Tanbīh al-Wulāt*, p326.

[149] While it is factually correct that the Prophet was orphaned and Abū Ţālib became his guardian; and that Mawlā Álī was the son-in-law of the Prophet ﷺ, referring to him thus is disrespectful and derisive. If a man says referring to his mother: "that woman, who is my father's wife," it may be factually correct but a disrespectful way of addressing his mother.

slipped and fell such that his face was turned away from the Qiblah; *Takbīr*[150] issued from the crowd that witnessed his hanging. Thereafter, a dog came around licking the blood of the scoundrel and Yaĥyā ibn Úmar said, the Prophet ﷺ has said: 'A dog shall not mess with the blood of a Muslim.' Qāđī Íyāđ concludes the section thus:

> Habīb ibn Rabīý al-Qarawī said: the madh'hab of Mālik and his companions is that whoever uttered anything which is derogatory to the Prophet ﷺ, such a person will be executed without any pardon. Ibn Áttāb has said: The Book and Sunnah necessitate that whosoever intends to give the Prophet ﷺ offence or hurt him, or is derogatory to him – whether implied or explicitly – howsoever little that [insult or offence] may be, it is obligatory to execute him. If a person utters anything mentioned in this chapter, which scholars have deemed as insulting and derogatory to the Prophet ﷺ; a person who utters these things shall be executed. No scholar has differed in this issue – neither the early nor the later ones, even though they differed [on the circumstances] to rule for execution. Similarly, I say that anyone who impinges on his ﷺ honour, or derisively says that he was a 'shepherd' or belittles him for forgetting something or that he suffered because of sorcery, or that he was wounded or his army was defeated [in battle, such as Uĥud] or hurt by his enemies, or the hardship he endured, or the affection he had for his [blessed] women; anyone who deliberately says all this to denigrate him shall be executed.[151]

Hārūn Rashīd asked Imām Mālik about a person who insulted the Prophet ﷺ, and mentioned that some jurists of Iraq ruled that he should be lashed. Imām Mālik was enraged and said: 'O Commander of the Faithful! Does anything remain for the ummah, after the denigration of its Prophet ﷺ? Those who disrespect prophets shall be executed and those who insult the companions shall be lashed.' Qāđī Íyāđ wonders who these 'jurists of Iraq' were, because prominent jurists of Iraq have ruled that such a person shall be executed. He says that it could be an ordinary scholar who was relatively unknown or that he was not an upright scholar; or that scholar must have said so because that punishment was prescribed for a person who had already repented and reverted to Islām.

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Scriptural Proofs for Punishment of a Blasphemer

According to the Qur'ān, the blasphemer of the Prophet ﷺ is damned in this world and in the hereafter. Allāh táālā has equated hurting the Prophet ﷺ with hurting Allāh táālā, even though none can hurt Him; Qāđī Íyāđ mentions the following verses in this regard:

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ لَعَنَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْءَاخِرَةِ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا

Verily, those who hurt Allāh and His Messenger; Allāh has damned them in this world and the hereafter; and readied for them a humiliating punishment.[152]

مَّلْعُونِينَ ۖ أَيْنَمَا ثُقِفُوٓا۟ أُخِذُوا۟ وَقُتِّلُوا۟ تَقْتِيلًا

Damned they are – wherever they are found, they shall be captured and [every one] put to death.[153]

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[150] The cries of *Allāhu Akbar*, God is the Greatest.

[151] *Shifa*, p357-358. Even though historical facts, mentioning these things derisively is insulting to him and therefore blasphemy; but if he mentions it as historical facts, he shall not be reproached [Khafājī, *Nasīm*].

[152] Sūrah Aĥzāb, 33:57.

[153] Sūrah Aĥzāb, 33:61.

قَٰتَلَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ أَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ

May Allāh destroy them, where do they rush headlong [away from the truth]?[154]

وَمِنْهُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ ٱلنَّبِيَّ وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ أُذُنٌ

And among them are those who hurt the prophet and they say 'He hears'. [155]

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ
لَا يَجِدُوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا۟ تَسْلِيمًا ۝

Never, by your Lord! They will not become believers until they have made you their judge in all their disputes and do not find objection in their hearts when you pronounce your judgement; and [until] they submit to your command without hesitation.[156]

وَٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ رَسُولَ ٱللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

And those who hurt the Messenger of Allāh, for them is a painful punishment [157]

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّمَا كُنَّا نَخُوضُ وَنَلْعَبُ ۚ قُلْ أَبِٱللَّهِ وَءَايَٰتِهِۦ
وَرَسُولِهِۦ كُنتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ۝ لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا۟ قَدْ كَفَرْتُم بَعْدَ إِيمَٰنِكُمْ ۚ

If you ask them, [why they said so] they will reply, 'We were jesting and were being playful.'
Tell them: 'Do you make fun of Allāh táālā, His verses and His Messenger?'
Do not proffer excuses – you have disbelieved after having professed faith.[158]

Exegetes have said that they became kāfirs because of what they had said concerning RasūlAllāh ﷺ. In a ĥadīth narrated by Álī ؓ, RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "Execute those who insult a prophet, and lash those who insult my companions." In another ṣaĥīĥ ĥadīth, RasūlAllāh ﷺ commanded the execution of Kaáb ibn Ashraf and said: "Who will punish Kaáb ibn Ashraf, for he hurts Allāh and His Messenger?" and this was only on account of his hurting the Messenger.

Similarly, Abū Rāfiý used to disparage the Prophet ﷺ and was put to death. On the day of the Triumph of Makkah, Ibn Khaţal and his two slavegirls who would sing poems insulting the Prophet ﷺ; all of them were sentenced to death.[159] Ibn Khaţal, Ibn al-Zibiýrā,[160] Ibn Abi's Sarĥ, Íkrimah ibn Abū Jahl and a few others were commanded to be killed, regardless of where they were found. Yet, those among the condemned ones who

[154] Sūrah Munāfiqūn, 63:4. Ibn Kathīr: How they go astray - from guidance towards evil, corruption.

[155] Sūrah Tawbah, 9:61. Qurţubī: [A hypocrite said]: Verily, Muĥammad ﷺ is all ears; he listens to everything said to him.

[156] Sūrah Nisā'a, 4:65.

[157] Sūrah Tawbah, 9:61.

[158] Sūrah Tawbah, 9:65-66.

[159] According to varying reports one or both the slavegirls repented and RasūlAllāh ﷺ forgave them; Ibn Khaţal was executed.

[160] Khafājī says that it is either Zabiýrā or Zibiýrā [*Nasīm al-Riyāđ*, 6/193].

became Muslims and came with repentance, RasūlAllāh ﷺ forgave them, like Ibn Abi's Sarĥ and others. Ibn Khaţal was found hiding in the drapes of the Kábah and was killed there itself. In another Ĥadīth, a man insulted the Prophet ﷺ and he said: "Who will suffice me from this enemy of mine?" Khālid [ibn Walīd] said, "I shall" and the Prophet ﷺ sent Khalid ؓ who executed the blasphemer.[161] In another narration, a blind man killed his slavegirl because she insulted the Prophet ﷺ, and when this reached the Prophet ﷺ, he did not punish or ask the blind man to pay blood money.

When Abū Bakr ؓ was insulted, a man stood up in the gathering and sought permission[162] to smite the neck of the insulter; Abū Bakr ؓ said: "Sit down, execution is only in the case of a person who insults RasūlAllāh ﷺ." When a person killed a man who insulted Úmar ؓ, the then Caliph, Úmar ibn Ábd al-Ázīz wrote to his governors that the death penalty is given only for those who insult the Prophet ﷺ because the blood of such a person is permissible; the death penalty will not apply for insulting anyone else. Similarly those blasphemers among the Jinn were killed by Muslim Jinns. A woman in Yemen blasphemed against the Prophet ﷺ in the time of Abū Bakr ؓ, singing poems deriding the Prophet ﷺ, and the governor of the province had her teeth broken and her hands amputated. When this reached Abū Bakr ؓ, he wrote: "If you had not punished her already, I would have ordered you to execute her, because blasphemy of prophets is unlike any other statutory punishment."

Ijmāá has been mentioned already and there are also proofs from analogy as described by Imām Subki. That sums up the basis for execution of a blasphemer from all the four sources of legislation: kitāb, sunnah, ijmāá and qiyās.

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Those whom the Prophet ﷺ Pardoned

There are many occasions when the Prophet ﷺ spared the death penalty or any other punishment for those who hurt him. For example, when a Jewish man told the Prophet ﷺ while saluting him: ***as-sāmu álaykum***,[163] but he was not punished. This sentence means: "Death to you," because *sām* means death. On another occasion a person was dissatisfied with the distribution of the Prophet ﷺ and said: "this is not for the pleasure of Allāh,"[164] and he ﷺ was offended because of it and said, Mūsā was given more offence than this and yet, he remained patient. Also, the Prophet did not sentence those hypocrites to death who harmed him and inflicted abuse upon his esteemed person.

Qādī Íyāđ says that it was because of the Prophet's ﷺ forbearance – and that he tolerated the maltreatment of disbelievers and was patient even in the face of physical harm. But this was in the initial stages of Islām, when Muslims did not have sufficient authority and force to prevent people from disrespecting the Prophet ﷺ. Moreover, the Law was not yet established and people had not fully seen the extent of forgiveness and

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[161] In another narration, it is Zubayr ؓ; or it could be two different occasions and two different scoundrels who had blasphemed. In yet another narration, it is a woman and Khālid ibn Walīd ؓ executes her.

[162] This is a clear instruction that people should not take the law in their own hands; only authorities should try the person and after evidence is produced and blasphemy established, the judgement – and death penalty – shall be pronounced.

[163] Instead of *as-salāmu álaykum*, by eliding one letter.

[164] He insinuated against the Prophet ﷺ.

forbearance of the Prophet ﷺ. Suppose, these executions were carried out in the initial stages of Islām, people would pick on these stray incidents and generalise that the Prophet of Islām was harsh. He ﷺ once said about a person who was disrespectful and a companion wanted to execute him: 'People will then say that Muĥammad ﷺ executes his companions.' But when numerous examples of his charity, his kindness and benevolence, his readiness to forgive, his patience in the face of violence and rudeness were established over many years, the Law could be promulgated; as Imām Mālik said: "What would remain of a nation, if its Prophet ﷺ is disparaged?' Therefore, Ibn Khaṭal was executed after Victory, and the ruling on blasphemy became strict. However, the Prophet ﷺ continued to forgive those who asked for his forgiveness, like Ibn Abi's Sarĥ, as we shall see presently. Qāđī Íyāđ says, it was his ﷺ right to forgive – not anybody else's discretion after him ﷺ:

> He ﷺ would accommodate disbelievers and hypocrites and was amicable with them; he would ignore their [slights and offence] and would bear with their rudeness and abuse; he would be patient with harshness and discourteousness. But that is not permissible for us – we cannot forbear or be patient with those who are disrespectful to him.[165]

Hypocrites would say things disrespectful to the Prophet ﷺ in secret and behind his back, but conceal their hatred and enmity when they were among Muslims; the Prophet ﷺ knew all about this and still ignored it, even though what they were saying behind his back was patent disbelief. Scholars have opined that it was because Islām and its laws were new and it would be some more time before penal law would be fully enforced and regardless, as long as they concealed their hatred and derision, they would not be punished – because rulings of the Sharīáh are based only on what is apparent. Muĥammad ibn al-Mawwāz said that if the hypocrites professed their enmity in the open, the Prophet ﷺ would have punished them.

Qāđī Íyāđ says that the Jew's salutation was not an explicit insult, but wishing him ﷺ misfortune and an attempt to hurt him; which counts as giving him offence, not an insult; it is therefore Imām Bukhārī captioned this ĥadīth: 'If a dhimmi or others say something by way of innuendo or implies disrespect to the Prophet ﷺ'. It may not count as disrespect and perhaps therefore, the Prophet ﷺ did not execute him. He further adds that causing offence to him ﷺ or insulting him ﷺ deserves the same ruling. However, the Jew was not punished because RasūlAllāh ﷺ made concessions in his hope of bringing them to Islām – similar is the case of the bedouin who caused hurt to RasūlAllāh ﷺ as he explains:

> If you say: it is mentioned in a ṣaĥīĥ ĥadīth that Sayyidah Āýishah ؓ said: "He ﷺ did not take revenge for wrongs to his own self; however, if things sacred and forbidden by Allāh táālā [to violate] were breached, he would take action." Know, that it does not mean he ﷺ never punished those who insulted him or offended him or belied him – because this is also sacred and forbidden by Allāh táālā,[166] and therefore he took action. However, he did not avenge such wrongs which were due to the boorishness [of some folk] or lack of etiquette in dealings or [harshness in] word or deed – concerning his ﷺ blessed person or property, which the perpetrator did not intend to hurt him, but was the nature of the desert Arab – harsh, ignorant and impertinence [that made them do so]. For example, a bedouin yanked the garment of the Prophet ﷺ so vigorously that it caused a rash on his ﷺ neck; another person spoke in a very loud voice in his ﷺ presence; another bedouin argued with the Prophet ﷺ concerning the sale of a horse in which Khuzaymah bore

[165] *Shifā*, p361.

[166] The honour of the Messenger ﷺ is indeed sacred, and breaching it is blasphemy.

witness;[167] or the alliance of his two wives[168] and other such things which deserve forgiveness. Some scholars have said that hurting the Prophet ﷺ is absolutely forbidden; it will not be permissible by a mubāĥ action.

Similarly, those kāfirs whom RasūlAllāh ﷺ expected to come to Islām, like the Jew who poisoned him, or the bedouin who sought to kill him or the Jewish woman who poisoned his food were spared because he ﷺ wanted them to come to Islām.

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Seven Categories of Rulings Concerning Disrespect

Qāđī Íyāđ mentions seven possibilites of statements deemed blasphemy, denigration or causing offence to the Prophet ﷺ. I have listed them below with brief illustrations; see Appendix G for a complete translation.

1. A person says blasphemous things and he says them deliberately with the intention to hurt or disrespect the Prophet ﷺ. This is outright apostasy and it carries death penalty without amnesty.

2. A person says things deemed blasphemy; even though his intention might not be to disrespect the Prophet ﷺ nor hurt him – yet, he has uttered these things deliberately and consciously; therefore, he becomes an apostate and his punishment is death without amnesty as in the previous case.

3. A person seeks to belie his ﷺ speech or the message he ﷺ has brought or deny his ﷺ prophethood or being a Messenger of Allah. This is also apostasy and carries the death penalty.

4. A person utters something which is not an explicit insult and his statement is open for interpretation and there is ambiguity whether his statement is directed towards the Prophet ﷺ or toward others. If the intention is proven to be blasphemy, he is awarded the death sentence – if a favourable interpretation can be found, he will be asked to repent and refrain from such things in the future.

5. A person does not intend to denigrate the Prophet ﷺ or mention a flaw or disrespect him; but he mentions certain mundane things that are permissible for the Prophet ﷺ as an example to justify his own cause or bolster his argument or exonerate his own self. Here too, statements will be examined and punishment differs according to the severity of his statement; if blasphemy is proven, the person shall be executed.

6. A person mentions blasphemies of others and mentions them by way of citation; these kind of citations fall into four categories: wājib, mandūb, makrūh and Ĥarām. If a person cites blasphemous sayings or poetry without any valid reason, the context of his citation is examined; rulings and punishments concerning such people differ accordingly.

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[167] RasūlAllāh ﷺ purchased a horse from a bedouin who disputed the sale thereafter. Khuzaymah gave witness in favour of RasūlAllāh ﷺ, who asked him: 'How can you bear witness when you were not present with us?' He said: 'O Messenger of Allāh! I bore witness in your favour because I have believed in your message; and believe that you speak nothing but the truth.' RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: 'Khuzaymah's witness is sufficient for anyone – for or against.' [*Usd al-Ghābah*, #1446].

[168] Khafaji says that it is about the two wives who collaborated against another wife, which was mentioned in the Qur'ān, Sūrah Taĥrīm; the word used here, *żaĥr* means mutual cooperation and mutual validation.

7. This case is different from the six above and does not entail express or implied insult; neither in words themselves or in the meaning of such words. These are reports of certain events and ĥadīth mentioned in books – and are mentioned purely as an academic exercise. In all these cases only such things which are permissible to attribute to RasūlAllāh ﷺ are mentioned. However, if a person mentions these permissible things with an intention to belittle or disparage the Prophet ﷺ, he shall be ruled as a blasphemer in one of the six categories above.

Punishment of those who insult the Prophet ﷺ

It is a matter of unanimous agreement in the ummah, that a person disrespecting the Prophet ﷺ or disparaging him is an apostate and shall be executed if he/she does not repent. Whether a Muslim or a disbeliever, whether a man or a woman – the blasphemer of the Prophet ﷺ is given capital punishment. However, there is a debate among scholars concerning repentance – Mālikī, Ĥanbalī and some Ĥanafī[169] scholars emphatically ruled that repentance will not prevent the execution of the blasphemer; that is, a blasphemer will be executed regardless of his repentance. The majority of Shāfiýīs and Ĥanafīs however ruled that the repentance of a blasphemer is acceptable and s/he can be granted clemency. Mālikī scholars were of the opinion that execution is a statutory punishment for blasphemy and hence cannot be waived even if the criminal repents; those who disagreed with them said that blasphemy causes a Muslim to become an apostate and he shall be dealt with as an apostate; consequently, if an apostate repents and converts to Islām, he is spared the death penalty. If a disbeliever commits blasphemy, he/she is pardoned if he/she converts to Islām and disavow what they have said earlier. Ibn Áābidīn writes citing Imām Subki from his *Sayf al-Maslūl*:

> Qāđī Íyāđ said that the entire ummah is in unanamious agreement that a Muslim who disparages or disrespects should be executed. Abū Bakr ibn al-Mundhir said that majority of scholars have agreed that the punishment is death for a blasphemer of the Prophet ﷺ; among those who held this opinion are Mālik ibn Anas, Layth, Aĥmad [ibn Ĥanbal], Is'ĥāq and Shāfiýī. Qāđī Íyāđ said: "Similar is the statement of Abū Ĥanīfah and his companions, [Sufyān] Thawri, scholars of Kūfā and Awzāýī."
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> Muĥammad ibn Saĥnūn has said that scholars are in unanimous agreement that the blasphemer of the Prophet ﷺ and his denigrator is an apostate. Allāh's promise of punishment for such a person is ordained. The punishment for such a person in our nation is execution. Whosoever doubts in the apostasy and punishment for the blasphemer has himself become an apostate. Abū Sulaymān al-Khaţţābī said: 'I do not know any Muslim who disagreed that it is mandatory to execute the blasphemer'.[170]

Criticising Ibn Ĥazm obliquely, who has an aberrant opinion, he says:

> Some scholar is quoted as having said that the person will not be anathematised unless he considers blasphemy as permissible. This is a big stumble and a great mistake – no reliable scholar has ever said such a thing nor can any valid evidence be found for such an opinion.

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[169] Ibn Áābidīn notes in *Tanbīh* that those who wrote that the repentance of a blasphemer is unacceptable followed Bazzāzī's lead; those interested in the analysis and appraisal of Bazzāzī's position may please refer to *Tanbīh al-Wulāt*.

[170] *Tanbīh al-Wulāt, Rasāyil Ibn Áābidīn* 1/316.

Execution of the Blasphemer: Apostasy or Ĥadd?

The basis for the execution of a blasphemer is debated upon by scholars; whether he is executed as an apostate, or execution is statutory punishment along with apostasy. One of the literal meanings of *ĥadd* is 'prevention.' Certain punishments are termed *ĥadd* because they are meant to be deterrents to committing such sins; when the sin is proven to have been committed,[171] it is legally binding to administer the *ĥadd* and impermissible for anyone to pardon – because it is the right of Allāh táālā. It is therefore that RasūlAllāh ﷺ did not accept Usāmah's intercession for a lady from the Makhzūm tribe who was caught stealing and told him: '..do you intercede [to seek exemption from] the punishment ordained by Allāh táālā?'[172] According to Mālikīs, punishment for blasphemy is a *ĥadd* and therefore, they said that execution cannot be spared by repentance. Qāđī Íyāđ says:

> The opinion of Mālik and his companions, statements of elders [*salaf*] and majority of scholars is that execution of the blasphemer is a statutory punishment – not [merely] for apostasy; and he shall be executed even if he repents from his blasphemy; therefore, they have said that the repentance of a blasphemer is unacceptable.[173]

Muĥammad ibn Saĥnūn said that a blasphemer does not automatically transfer to another religion by committing blasphemy of the Prophet ﷺ, rather he has committed an unpardonable crime and its punishment is death; his execution will not be stayed even if he repents.[174] Among Shāfiýīs Abū Bakr al-Farisī and Abū Bakr al-Qaffāl have a similar opinion and Imām al-Ĥaramayn favoured it. However according to Imām Subki, the madh'hab of Imām Shāfiýī – which is generally followed by rulers everywhere – is that the repentance of a blasphemer is accepted [and hence spared execution after repentance and reverting to Islām]. Shāfiýīs and Ĥanafīs said that blasphemy is a form of apostasy and therefore follows the rulings for an apostate; which means that if a blasphemer repents, he shall be spared the death penalty.

> [Imām Subki] said: This is what I know about Shāfiýīs; Ĥanafīs are closer to Shāfiýīs in this respect – and none among Ĥanafīs said that the repentance of a blasphemer is unacceptable. Both these groups did not discuss the issue specifically about blasphemy; rather, this was mentioned under the topic of a dhimmi violating the covenant, and the context was that a Muslim does not insult the Prophet ﷺ. He further said: The Ĥanbalīs are closer to Mālikīs in this issue, and it is famously known about [Imām] Aĥmad that he did not accept the repentance of a blasphemer; even though there is another report that he accepted it...[175]

Ibn Áābidīn, talking about the Ĥanafī position says that Qāđī Íyāđ, Ţabarī, Subkī and Ibn Taymiyyah have all mentioned invariably that Imām Abū Ĥanīfah's position is that of accepting repentance of a Muslim who has committed blasphemy; he cites Imam Abū Yūsuf from his *Kitāb al-Kharāj*:

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[171] Whether by testimony of others or by confession.

[172] These punishments are for deterrence – the ĥadd for adultery thus is to protect lineage and legitimacy of births, the ĥadd for stealing is to protect property, the ĥadd for intoxication is to avert people losing sanity and consciousness thereby preventing them from committing other crimes, the ĥadd for false accusation of adultery [*qadhaf*] is to protect honour. The ĥadd for an apostate is death penalty if he does not revert to Islām; this is to safeguard our religion – if the penalty for apostasy was not death, then many people with weak faith would become apostates, *al-íyādhu billāh.*

[173] *Shifā*, p377.

[174] Paraphrased from *Shifā*; see *Tanbih al-Wulāt,* p321.

[175] Ibid., p323.

> Any Muslim who disrespects the Prophet or belies him or disparages him or denigrates him had committed kufr and disbelieved in Allāh táālā. His wife goes out of wedlock. If he repents [he will be spared] else, he shall be executed.[176]

Imām Aĥmad Riđā says:

> The ruling 'tawbah is not accepted' holds good in Islamic lands ruled by a Muslim sovereign, so that the blasphemer is executed even after his repentance.[177] Nevertheless, if a blasphemer sincerely repents, it is accepted near Allāh táālā. The blasphemer should not make this [ruling] a basis to forsake repentance and say: 'If repentance is not accepted, then why should I repent?' No, this is not the case. Repentance will certainly erase kufr and make him a Muslim and he will be saved from everlasting punishment in Hell. There is a unanimous agreement upon this as described in *Radd al-Muĥtār* and other books.[178]

Ibn Áābidīn mentions *Nutaf* of Shaykh al-Islām Sughdī,[179] Fatāwā of Muayyad Zādah, *Sharĥ al-Ţaĥāwī*, *Muýīn al-Ĥukkām*, *Minaĥ al-Ghaffār*, *Nūr al-Áyn* that the predominant opinion of scholars in the madh'hab is that a blasphemer is an apostate and shall be dealt as an apostate; which implies that he shall be requisitioned to repent and if he does, he shall be spared execution.

> I have seen in *Ĥāwī* of Zāhidī in which he quotes: If a person disrespects the Prophet ﷺ, he becomes an apostate and his repentance is [only valid] after he renews his faith. Some later scholars said that such a blasphemer's repentance is void and he shall be executed under ĥadd, based on the command of the Prophet ﷺ, when he entered the city after the Victory of Makkah, that those who disparaged the Prophet ﷺ should be executed. However the accurate position is that they will not be executed after renewing their faith, because the Prophet ﷺ forbade Álī ؓ from killing those Meccans who said "***lā ilāha illā'Allāh Muĥammad RasūlAllāh***" [including] those who were already ordered to be executed, as mentioned earlier – those who disparaged the Prophet ﷺ previously. This is because, disparaging or disrespecting the Prophet is kufr which necessitates execution and renewing faith will absolve that sin of apostasy and its mandatory punishment which is execution.[180]

Ibn Áābidīn mentions another opinion among Ĥanafīs which is that of Shaykh al-Islām Abu's Súūd al-Ímādī, that a blasphemer takes the ruling of a zindīq; and if a zindīq has already been reported to the authorities and testimony [concerning his beliefs] has been validated, he shall be executed; his tawbah is not accepted and it will not prevent his execution. Ibn Áābidīn finds this opinion self-contradictory as he analyses it in his *Tanbih* and his final word in this matter is that a blasphemer will be spared the death penalty if he/she repents and renews their faith:

> We cannot devise punishments and reprimands based on our own opinions; we are charged by the Prophet ﷺ to act upon the rule of law he ﷺ has established – if the lawmaker commands us to issue the death penalty, we do so and if the lawmaker instructs us to forego execution, we shall desist. If we do not find explicit text in an issue, nor confirmed opinions of our mujtahid imams, we must deliberate. We cannot say that the love for our Prophet ﷺ requires us to execute a person even if he reverts to Islām [and repents from what issued from] his unbridled tongue. The condition for true love is in following [the Prophet ﷺ] not in innovations. We fear that RasūlAllāh ﷺ will be the first to question us concerning the blood of a person who is thus executed;

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[176] Cf. *Tanbīh* p324.

[177] As a deterrent to prevent others from committing blasphemy.

[178] *The Preamble to Faith*, translation of *Tamhid e Īmān*, p41.

[179] Shaykh al-Islām Abu'l Ĥasan Álī al-Sughdī [d.461/1068].

[180] *Tanbīh* p324.

> therefore, it is necessary for us to withhold [from ordering the execution of a repentant] when he reverts to Islām. His Lord will hold him to account for whatever is in his heart – because our Prophet ﷺ accepted the Islām of whosoever accepted it outwardly…[181]

Another minor topic that is debated is: whether execution is for apostasy, or for blasphemy or for both? Imām Subki says that in the case of a Muslim blasphemer, there are two bases for his execution: apostasy and blasphemy; and both of them punishable by death; and execution is the statutory punishment in both cases. Therefore the case of a Muslim blasphemer is much more serious than that of a kāfir blasphemer – because the latter is held liable for one crime: that of blasphemy, not apostasy.

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Repentance and Requisition of Repentance[182]

It has been mentioned in various citations above that the repentance of a blasphemer is not acceptable according to Mālikīs and Ĥanbalīs; and there is difference of opinion within the madh'hab of both Shāfiýīs and Ĥanafīs.

> As for the Ĥanbalīs, their opinion is closer to that of Mālikīs – and Imām Aĥmad's opinion is well-known that the repentance of a blasphemer is not acceptable; however, there is another report that he considered it acceptable. Anyhow, the madh'hab of Imām Aĥmad and Imām Mālik is the same.[183]

Imām Subki notes that we do not have any validated report from the Prophet ﷺ that he executed anyone after reverting to Islām, and based on the Ĥadīth: "Islām annuls everything prior to it; and repentance erases everything prior."[184] The preferred opinion of Ĥanafīs is similar to that described by Imām Subki according to Ibn Áābidīn. Imām Subki mentions three categories of disbelievers here: the original kāfir, the apostate and the blasphemer:

- The original kāfir who follows his religion and has been following it always.
- The apostate – and he is worse than the first and therefore nothing is accepted from him except Islām; in contrast to the first kind who can [be dealt with] Jizyah or enslavement or pardon or ransom.
- The blasphemer – and he is the worst of the three. Because it is not his religion [to blaspheme] and he disparages the prophets of Allāh and His messengers. He plants doubts in the hearts of weak Muslims; therefore his crime is the most heinous and therefore he will not be given the option of repentance in contrast to the second type; because the common apostate may have a confusion [which led him to renege from faith] which could be clarified.

  There is no reason [for anyone] to insult the Prophet ﷺ nor any confusion about its [ruling].

  Therefore it is neither mandatory nor preferable to requisition repentance and nothing prevents [the ruler] executing him and cleansing this earth; if he repents, he has redeemed his own life. This is what I think is the reason for the opinion that a blasphemer is abandoned, but if he repents it is accepted. [185]

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[181] *Tanbīh* Cf. *Sayf al-Maslūl*, p209.

[182] *istitābah*: Giving the blasphemer an opportunity to repent; requisition for repentance from blasphemy.

[183] *Sayf al-Maslūl*, p175.

[184] *Musnad Imām Aĥmed*, 4/199, 204; Muslim has a similar report but with a different wording.

[185] *Sayf al-Maslūl*, p180; three kinds of disbelievers; notice Ibn Taymiyyah mentions three kinds of apostates as well.

The Original Kāfir and the Apostate

The original kāfir who is imprisoned as an enemy combatant will be at the discretion of the Muslim commander; he is either executed or released or ransomed depending on the circumstances and the situation. If he is a Jew or Christian, he may be released after accepting Jizyah or if he converts to Islām. And if it is a woman, she will not be executed unless she is a fighting soldier. But an apostate is not dealt similarly; he or she shall be forced to repent and revert to Islām; and no other option is possible – either they revert to Islām or they face execution. Imām Subki says:

> Thus it should be apparent to you that an apostate is executed under ĥadd; and apostasy is a special form of disbelief which is punishable by death – and there is no other option for the apostate except to revert to Islām; this is unlike any other form of kufr.[186]

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Differences between a Blaspheming Apostate and an Ordinary Apostate

The ruling concerning an apostate has been mentioned in the previous chapter. He shall be requisitioned to repent and if he repents, he shall be spared the death penalty. However, concerning a person whose apostasy is due to blasphemy of the Prophet ﷺ:

- Mālikīs and Ĥanbalīs did not accept the tawbah of a blaspheming apostate.[187]
- Shāfiýīs and Ĥanafīs predominantly accepted the tawbah of a blaspheming apostate.[188]
- Some Ĥanafī scholars inclined towards the Mālikī/Ĥanbalī position and mentioned that the blaspheming apostate cannot be spared execution even if he repents.
- Another opinion is that when a Muslim commits blasphemy, he is dealt as a *zindiq*[189] - that is, if a zindiq repents prior to his capture and trial, he will be pardoned; but if he is captured and he repents thereafter, his repentance is not accepted and he will not escape the death penalty.

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[186] *Sayf al-Maslūl*, p154. Citing from Suyūṭī's *Ashbāh*, Al-Ghawj has mentioned twenty differences between an original kāfir and an apostate in his footnotes.

[187] Ibn Taymiyyah mentions three categories of apostates: the apostate, the apostate who has additional crimes along with his apostasy from Islām, and the blasphemer who becomes apostate because of it [*Ṣārim*, 376].

[188] A further nuance concerning acceptance of repentance mentioned by Imām Subkī as paraphrased by Haytami:

> That which Imām Subkī said about a blasphemer of our Prophet ﷺ - that is, if he was well-known prior to his blasphemy as a man of dodgy beliefs [*bi fasādi áqīdatihi*] and there is plenty of supplementary evidence that he committed this blasphemy with the intention of disparaging the Prophet ﷺ, such a person will be executed and his repentance will not be accepted. [*Iýlām*, p115].

Haytami says that this is Imām Subkī's own opinion and in which he differs from the rest of the Shāfiýīs, by his own admission; and then mentions that his own shaykh, Imām Zakariyyah did not agree with it except in a specific case of blasphemy in which the blasphemer accuses of adultery [*qadhaf*].

[189] A closet heretic, whose heresy is either atheism or any such thing conflicting with fundamentals of Islām.

Blasphemy by a Dhimmi or Other Disbeliever

If a dhimmi commits blasphemy of the Prophet ﷺ, the covenant he has with Muslims is voided according to majority of scholars except Imām Abū Ĥanīfah and Imām Sufyān al-Thawrī who said that it does not void their covenant. The other three madh'habs – Mālikī, Shāfiýī and Ĥanbalī – say that a blaspheming dhimmi gets the death penalty; but if he repents by converting to Islām, he shall be spared. According to Ibn Áābidīn, the following are the varying positions within madh'habs concerning repentance, execution and pardon of a dhimmi:

1. Mālikīs:
    a. The blaspheming dhimmi is executed if he is unrepentant; and his repentance is void as long as he remains a kāfir. Even though, Mālikīs do not admit the repentance of a blasphemer and he shall be executed regardless of his repentance.
    b. If the blaspheming dhimmi repents by converting to Islām, he shall escape the death penalty according to the better known opinion of Mālik reported by Walīd.
2. Ĥanbalīs:
    a. Repentance is accepted absolutely: whether the blasphemer is a Muslim or a Kāfir.
    b. Repentance is unacceptable regardless of the blasphemer being a Muslim or a Kāfir.
    c. Repentance of a dhimmi is accepted if he converts to Islām; but repentance of a blaspheming Muslim will be unacceptable.
3. Shāfiýīs:
    a. According to Imām Shāfiýī, if a dhimmi disparages the Prophet ﷺ, he has voided his covenant and shall be put to death; his opinion is based on the execution of Kaáb ibn Ashraf.
    b. The well-known opinion of most Shāfiýī scholars is that the repentance of a blasphemer is accepted and he shall be spared the death penalty after reverting to Islām.
4. Ĥanafīs:
    a. If a dhimmi commits blasphemy, he has not voided his covenant[190] and he shall be reprimanded harshly; even though a blaspheming Muslim is put to death.
    b. Shaykh Khayruddīn al-Ramlī said in his marginalia of *Baĥr* that: 'just because his covenant is not voided does not mean he will go unpunished and that he will not be executed'.[191]

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[190] Ibn Áābidīn says that a Muslim is naturally inclined towards the position of other three madh'habs, but we being followers cannot oppose our Imām only on the basis of our feelings. The reason our Imām said that the covenant is not voided is because it is made upon the payment of Jizyah and as long as they pay Jizyah and are repressed; as said in the Qur'ānic verse.

Muftī Abu's Súūd made a distinction that if the dhimmi negates the prophethood of RasūlAllāh ﷺ, or says that he ﷺ executed Jews unjustly, the dhimmi has not violated his covenant; but if he attributes vile things like adultery or accusation of lying, he has indeed voided the covenant. 'Not voiding the covenant' means that by this act, the dhimmi has not become a warring disbeliever [*ĥarbī*] such that his life and property are not protected anymore.

[191] Which was also said by Tājuddīn Subkī and Ibn Áābidīn confirms that nothing in our madh'hab prevents us from executing the blaspheming dhimmi if he does not repent or convert to Islām.

In other words, a dhimmi shall also be executed for blasphemy and will escape the death penalty only if he converts to Islām.

c. Women are not executed for apostasy; however, if they disparage the Prophet ﷺ, or indulge in sorcery, they shall be executed as exceptions to the rule.

Ibn Áābidīn says:

> **If you pose the objection**: What is the difference between a dhimmi and a Muslim – and you insist that according to the madh'hab of Abū Ĥanīfah and his companions, if a Muslim blasphemer repents and reverts to Islām, he shall not be killed?
>
> **I reply**: A Muslim's state is known; [blasphemy] might have occurred in a fit of rage or due to stupidity or slip of the tongue – not that he believes in it. So, when he repents and reverts to Islām, we accept him in faith. Contrast this with a kāfir, whose state suggests that he believes in such things and his utterance [disrespecting the Prophet ﷺ] is to disparage our religion. We have mentioned earlier, that if a Muslim keeps repeating the same [blasphemous thing] and is well-known for holding this belief and invites others to believe in it, he shall be executed. Neither is his repentance accepted, nor is his Islām – [he is] like a zindīq and there is no difference between [such a] Muslim and a dhimmi, because we are talking about someone who keeps repeating it and is known for saying such things, which proves that he believes in it and is a manifestation of the filth inside as he spreads mischief on earth. The repentance of such a person is only a camouflage to save his own skin; and by executing such a person, we ward off his harm directed against RasūlAllāh ﷺ and his ummah – because those with weak faith may go astray because of him.[192]

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Enforcing Blasphemy Laws and Execution

Like all penal laws, enforcing blasphemy law and execution is the right of an Islamic ruler in an Islamic state. Individuals should not take the law in their own hands.[193]

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The Story of Kaáb ibn Ashraf

Kaáb ibn Ashraf was a prominent Jewish leader and also a poet who would compose satirical poems mocking the Prophet ﷺ and his companions. He would exhort the polytheist Quraysh and instigate them against Muslims. He was from the Banū Nađīr – the tribe and settlement of Jews in Madīnah. After the victory of the Prophet ﷺ at Badr, Kaáb was enraged and he went to Makkah singing dirges for the polytheists killed in Badr, and instigating Meccans to go back and fight the Prophet ﷺ.

He would elevate the pagan religion over Islām and openly professed his enmity to RasūlAllāh ﷺ. When the scoundrel returned to Madīnah, RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "O Allāh! Protect me from the evil of Kaáb ibn Ashraf as You Wish.' Kaáb had earlier made a pledge to RasūlAllāh ﷺ that he would not aid anyone against him ﷺ nor fight him ﷺ; but he broke his promise and proclaimed his enmity after his return from Makkah and he openly mocked the Prophet ﷺ.

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[192] *Tanbīh*, p354.

[193] If an enemy combatant is killed by a Muslim, there shall be no penalty upon the Muslim.

In the Ĥadīth of both *Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, narrated by Jābir ibn Ábdullāh, RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: 'Who will deal with Kaáb ibn Ashraf? He has hurt Allāh and His Messenger.' MuĤammad ibn Maslamah and his companions, with the permission of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ killed him thereafter. Some scholars debated whether Ibn Ashraf was executed due to sedition or due to blasphemy, but it is unanimously agreed that he was killed on account of blasphemy.[194] This is one of the major proofs in the Sharīáh for the execution of a dhimmi who commits blasphemy.

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Apostasy of two Songstresses

There were two girls who would sing poems mocking the Prophet ﷺ, and he ordered them to be executed; one of the girls whose name was Arnab or Qarībah was executed, and the other girl Fartanā was given the option to accept Islām, which she did and therefore pardoned by the Prophet ﷺ and she lived until the caliphate of Sayyidunā Úthmān ؓ. Ibn Taymiyyah notes that by ijmāá it is not permissible to execute disbelieving women only for their kufr and both *Bukhārī* and *Muslim* report from Ibn Úmar ؓ who said: "RasūlAllāh ﷺ saw a woman killed in one of the battles and he forbade the killing of women and children." Further he clarifies that this amnesty is not for combatants – and if she is a fighting soldier, then she will be treated as an enemy – and killed in combat, if need be; according to Imām Shāfiýī, she shall be tackled with the intention of self-defence.[195]

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The Story of Ibn Abi's SarĤ

On the day of Victory, Ábdullāh ibn Abi's SarĤ was one of the six condemned to death; he came to RasūlAllāh ﷺ hiding behind Úthmān ؓ, who then pushed him in front of RasūlAllāh ﷺ and said: "O Messenger of Allāh, accept his allegiance." RasūlAllāh ﷺ looked up and did not say anything and Úthmān ؓ beseeched him three times and after the third time, he accepted the *bayáh* and then turning to his other companions told them: 'Is there not a single guided man amongst you? When you saw this person, and I did not accept his *bayáh*, why didn't anyone kill him?' The companions replied: 'We did not know O Messenger of Allāh, what ***you*** were thinking; if you had signalled with your eyes, [we would have struck him].' The Prophet ﷺ told them: 'It is not becoming of prophet to deceive, even by his eyes'.[196]

Ábdullāh ibn Saád ibn Abi's SarĤ was among the scribes of RasūlAllāh ﷺ. The Devil had deceived him; he reneged from Islām and joined the polytheists of Makkah. RasūlAllāh ﷺ condemned him to death on the day of Victory of Makkah, so he took refuge of Úthmān ؓ who interceded for him and RasūlAllāh ﷺ forgave him. When he ﷺ entered Makkah, he ﷺ declared amnesty to all except the six who were named. Ábdullāh would say: 'I would manipulate him [RasūlAllāh ﷺ] as I wished; he would dictate something and I would say: "How about such and such?" and he ﷺ would say, "Yes."' This was because RasūlAllāh would say: "The Knower, the

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[194] Imām Subkī says that there are only three possibilities for Ibn Ashraf's case: He did not violate his covenant but was killed for insulting the Prophet ﷺ; or he violated the covenant and he was killed for both breaching it and blasphemy, or he was killed for being a [warring] disbeliever after violating the covenant.

[195] See *Sārim al-Maslūl*, p159-161.

[196] By indicating with eyes or any other way. Abū Dāwūd narrates this via Muṣáb ibn Saád reporting from Saád ibn Abī Waqqāṣ.

Forbearing"[197] and he would say: "Shall I write: The Powerful, the Wise" and RasūlAllāh ﷺ would say: "Both are correct." When Ibn Abi's Sarĥ came to the Prophet ﷺ, his anger had not subsided; but when Úthmān ؓ interceded for him, the Prophet forgave him. We know from the Prophet's noble character that whenever someone sought his pardon, he pardoned them.

A similar case is mentioned in Bukhārī reporting from Anas: A Christian youth accepted Islām and became the scribe of RasūlAllāh ﷺ for a while; thereafter, he reneged and became an apostate reverting to Christianity. He would say: 'Muĥammad ﷺ does not know anything I write for him.' The wretch died and they buried him, and the following morning his body was found expelled from his grave. The Christians said: 'Muĥammad ﷺ and his companions have done this. They have exhumed our man and thrown him out.' So they dug an even deeper grave and buried him – the earth spewed him out once again and they realised that this was not done by men – so they simply cast him away. Imām Subkī says concerning these two cases that if indeed, what they claimed was true, then it must be on account of different readings – these scribes did not understand this concept and thought that they were manipulating him ﷺ. Anas ibn Zunaym al-Daylī was accused of blasphemy and RasūlAllāh ﷺ initially ordered his execution, but forgave him upon the intercession of Nawfal ibn Muáāwiyah; quoting this incident,[198] Imām Subkī says that if it is well-established, it is the strongest proof that blasphemy is unpardonable, even after repentance and Islām unless RasūlAllāh ﷺ himself forgave such a person – because it is only his right to forgive.

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Blasphemer and Inheritance Law

Scholars differed in the case of inheritance and a blasphemer [of the Prophet ﷺ], whether he can inherit or whether his heirs can inherit etc. Álī al-Qārī explains the general ruling in the Ĥanafī madh'hab concerning apostates:[199]

1. An apostate cannot inherit from either a Muslim, or a kāfir or another apostate.
2. A Muslim can inherit from an apostate from that wealth/property that he made when he was a Muslim; according to Imām Shāfiýī; or all of it is annexed to the common fund of Muslims.
3. The wealth the apostate earned during his apostasy is similar to spoils and therefore taken into the common fund of Muslims – but imams Abū Yūsuf and Muĥammad opined that even this can be inherited by his Muslim heirs.

Qāđī Íyāđ's passage is paraphrased below concerning inheritance of a blasphemer:[200]

1. The property of a Muslim blasphemer [sābb] who dies or is killed for blasphemy belongs to Muslims similar to spoils of war and is thus placed in the common treasury of Muslims [Saĥnūn].
2. If his blasphemy is not public, then Muslim heirs of the blasphemer can inherit from it; but if it is publicly known, his property belongs to the common fund of Muslims [Aşbagh].[201]

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[197] The Prophet ﷺ would say: ***álīmun-ĥalīm*** and Ibn Abi's Sarĥ would say ***ázīzun-ĥakīm***.

[198] Sayf al-Maslūl, p328.

[199] *Sharĥ al-Shifā*, 2/486.

[200] *Sharĥ al-Shifā*, Qari 2/487.

[201] The Qāđī adds: "He will be executed regardless of his blaspheming openly or hides it without being requisitioned for repentance".

3. If he is executed – but he denies the testimony against him[202] – his property will be inherited by Muslim heirs [Abu'l Ĥasan al-Qābisī].
4. If he is executed – and he accepts that he has committed blasphemy and repents – he shall be deemed a Muslim and his property will be dispensed according to Islamic inheritance laws.
5. If he is executed – and he accepts that he has committed blasphemy and does not repent – his property belongs to the common fund of Muslims.
6. If a kāfir blasphemer is killed for blasphemy, his property is annexed to the common fund of Muslims similar to spoils.

Imām Subkī's statement is paraphrased below for the Shāfiýī position:[203]

1. If a Muslim blasphemer [sābb] dies or is executed for blasphemy, he is treated as any other apostate.
2. If he repents and reverts to Islām, those who accept his repentance[204] rule that he is like any other Muslim.
3. Those who do not accept repentance, rule for execution under ĥadd; but his inheritance is like that of any other Muslim – like the inheritance of a married person executed for adultery.
4. Concerning a Kāfir who is executed for blasphemy (without repentance): his property cannot be inherited by Muslim inheritors – because inheritance across people of different religions is impermissible. However, as he has voided his covenant, his property will be annexed to the common treasury of Muslims similar to spoils or tithes.

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Intentional and Unintentional Harm

Adhā means to hurt; and if it is more in intensity it is termed *đurr*. *Sabb/shatm* means to insult, to disparage. While insult and disparaging also causes hurt, the converse is not always true and hurting does not translate to insult. Imām Subkī says:

> Adhā or offence is of two kinds: intentional and unintentional. Misţaĥ, Ĥamnah and Ĥassān did not intend to offend or hurt the Prophet ﷺ; therefore, they are neither ruled kāfir nor liable to be executed; but Ibn Ubayy[205] intentionally harmed and offended the Prophet ﷺ, therefore he deserves to be killed – however, this is the right of the Prophet ﷺ [to avenge or forgive] so he ﷺ spared him.[206]

Similarly, the bedouin who yanked the mantle of the Prophet and causing him physical harm – it was unintentional harm and certainly not meant to insult him. Insulting the Prophet cannot be classed in the same category, as Qāđī Íyāđ has explained:

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[202] Even though it is accepted in the court of law.

[203] *Sayf*, p434.

[204] That is, Shāfiýīs and Ĥanafīs.

[205] The leader of hypocrites in Madīnah.

[206] *Sayf*, p135. These are companions of the Prophet ﷺ, but unwittingly became partners of hypocrites and joined them in the calumny of the Sayyidah Āýishah ﵂. Imām Subkī says that they probably did not know that the blessed wives of the Prophets ﷺ are always chaste. Regardless, they repented and RasūlAllāh ﷺ forgave them.

> Even if the person proves that he has not deliberately said any of this to deride him ﷺ; or intended to insult or disparage him ﷺ – whether it was ignorance that made him say such things or because he was discontented or disgruntled, or he was inebriated, or he blurted it out without thinking or it slipped from his tongue, or because of haughtiness or impudence, or impetuousity and recklessness; in all such cases, the ruling is the same as in the first case – that is, execution without further deliberation or any hesitation, because the excuse of ignorance [in such cases] which cause apostasy is inadmissible, nor is the excuse of slip of the tongue, or any other excuse which I have mentioned above, as long as the person is sane and has not lost his reason.[207]

Ibn Ĥajar al-Haytamī elaborates on the above in *Iýlām*:

> [Qāđī Íyāđ's] opinion is obvious and confirms to the principles of our madh'hab. Because someone is ruled kāfir based on what is observed from the outside; one cannot look at his motives or intentions, nor consider the context in which he has said so.
>
> However, the excuse of a person who claims that he did not know will be accepted according to the state and conditions of his Islām.[208] His excuse will also be accepted if he claims that it was a slip of the tongue – only to ward off the death penalty even though it is not accepted in cases of divorce and manumission; because the former is the right of Allāh táālā to forgive and the latter two require forgiveness of humans.[209]

In *Sharĥ al-Şaghīr*:

> {**No excuse is admissible**} of a blasphemer {**citing ignorance**} because none can be excused for committing kufr claiming that he did not know {**or in a state of inebriation**} as it is forbidden {**or recklessness**} that is when one is garrulous and talks without restraint. Neither is [the excuse of] slip of the tongue acceptable {**or intense anger**} if one commits blasphemy in anger, he will not be executed.[210]

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Blasphemy of Other Prophets and Angels

Blasphemy of every prophet and angels is apostasy, and is similar to disrespecting our Prophet ﷺ and therefore carries the death penalty without requisition of repentance; there is no difference of opinion in this matter.[211] Imām Abū Ĥanīfah and his companions ruled that belying, disparaging, disrespecting, belittling or disbelieving in any prophet of Allāh is apostasy, and a person who does so shall be dealt with as an apostate. Qāđī Íyāđ specifies that takfīr is in case of [denial of] angels and prophets who are well known; and excludes Hārūt-Mārūt, Khađir, Luqmān and Dhu'l Qarnayn, on whom scholars have differed whether they were angels or prophets. The Qāđī says that even then, if this difference is mentioned by a scholar, he shall be excused as a valid difference of opinion among scholars; but if a common man argues about it, he shall be scolded – and if he repeats it, he shall be reprimanded.[212]

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[207] *Shifā*, p364.

[208] Literally: to his closeness or distance to Islām. The shaykh means that if he is a recent revert, or someone who does not have easy access to scholars, such as a child of Muslim parents in non-Islamic lands where exposure to Islām is far less and found only in enclaves.

[209] *Al-Iýlām bi Qawāţi ý al-Islām*, Haytamī, p82; also cited in the appendix of *Sayf al-Maslūl*, p591.

[210] *Sharĥ al-Şaghīr*, 4/439; also in *Sayf* p591.

[211] *Sayf*, p433.

[212] *Shifā*, p401, Quoted in *Şārim*, *Sayf* and *Tanbīh* with additional comments.

Insult and Slander of Companions

Insulting and slandering the companions of the Prophet ﷺ is a great sin and it is ĥarām; the Prophet warned us to be careful when talking of his noble companions and he ﷺ said:

> Fear Allāh concerning my companions. Do not make them a target [of curse and abuse]. Whoever loves them for my sake, I love them and whosoever hates them – I hate them for hating me. Whoever hurts them has hurt me – and whosoever hurts me has hurt Allāh. And whoever hurts Allāh, it is nigh that He shall hold him to account.[213]

In another ĥadīth:

> Whoever disparages my companions is accursed; the damnation of Allāh táālā, Angels and men is upon him. Allāh táālā will not accept either his obligatory or supererogatory worship.[214]

In another ĥadīth:

> Do not disparage my companions; verily, in the final days, a group of people will appear who shall disparage my companions. Do not pray upon them – nor pray with them; do not marry them, do not sit with them and if they fall sick, do not visit them.[215]

Ţabarānī reports from Sayyidunā Álī ﷺ that "whoever disparages prophets will be executed and he who disparages the companions will be lashed." It is reported that there was an argument between the companion Miqdād ﷺ and Úbaydullāh ibn Úmar ﷺ, and the latter abused him. When this reached Úmar ﷺ, he called for the executioner and said, I will have his tongue pulled out[216] so that no one will ever dare to disparage a companion of the Prophet ﷺ. Another companion interceded for his son but our master Úmar ﷺ was determined: "Leave me alone. I will have his tongue cut so that anybody after me will not dare to disrespect any companion of RasūlAllāh ﷺ." Imām Subkī says that Sayyidunā Úmar ﷺ spared him probably upon the intervention of other companions or that Miqdād ﷺ forgave him.[217]

A person indulging in calumny of the companions does not become a kāfir except in some cases. However, he is a fāsiq if he disparages or scorns them; and shall be severely reprimanded by the ruler. Imām Subkī writes that it is not permissible for the ruler to pardon anyone who disparages any companion; rather, he should have him arrested and requisitioned to repent. If he repents, he shall be released – else he shall be jailed for life until he repents. Ibn al-Mundhir has said: "I do not know anybody who mandated execution for disparaging anyone

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[213] Cf. *Shifā*, and the ĥadīth is found in *Tirmidhī*, *Musnad Imām Aĥmed*, *Ṣaĥīĥ ibn Ĥibbān* among others.

[214] Ţabarānī narrating from Ibn Ábbās.

[215] *Kanz al-Úmmāl*, 11/542, #32542; reporting from Khaţīb and Ibn Ásākir, narrating from Anas ﷺ.

[216] Literally, "cut his tongue." It does not take a genius to figure out that if junior companions were rebuked for disrespecting a senior companion – it remains impermissible for the most pious scholar who came thousand years later, let alone ornery whippersnappers of our time.

[217] *Sayf*, p425. Úbaydullāh was a junior companion who was a small child when Allāh's Messenger ﷺ passed away; Miqdād is a senior and prominent companion. He is among the foremost Muslims and among the first seven who publicly proclaimed their faith in Makkah. He is among the fourteen whom RasūlAllāh ﷺ described as his closest disciples: "Every prophet was given seven close aides and disciples – I was given fourteen: Ĥamzah, Jaáfar, Abū Bakr, Úmar, Álī, Ĥasan, Ĥusayn, Ibn Masúūd, Salmān, Ámmār, Ĥudhayfah, Abū Dharr, Miqdād and Bilāl" ﷺ.

other than prophets." However, Firyābī[218] ruled a person who insulted Abū Bakr ﷺ as an apostate. Similarly, a group of scholars have ruled the Rāfiđīs as apostates and it is impermissible to eat animals slaughtered by them.[219] Ábd al-Raĥmān ibn Abzā, a companion, ruled that anyone insulting Abū Bakr and Úmar ﷺ shall be executed. The following is a summary concerning those who insult the Ṣaĥābah ﷺ:

1. If a person disparages and curses the companions and deems it permissible to do so [unless it is due to an error in interpretation] he is a kāfir; otherwise, he is a fāsiq and a heretic.
2. If one denies that Abū Bakr ﷺ was a companion, such a person is a kāfir by ijmāá.
3. Whoever accuses Sayyidah Āýishah ﷺ of that which Allāh táālā has exonerated her,[220] that person is a kāfir by unanimous agreement. There is ijmāá on the apostasy of such a person.
4. Similarly, accusing any Mother of Believers of adultery is kufr and such a person will be executed without requisition for repentance [as it implied blasphemy].
5. Whoever slanders or insults any member of the Prophet's household [Aāl al-Bayt] has committed sin and will be lashed and reprimanded severely – yet, such a person will not be ruled kāfir nor executed.
6. A person who makes *takfīr* of all the companions is an apostate.[221]
7. Concerning the person who slanders, insults Abū Bakr ﷺ and Úmar ﷺ there is a difference of opinion; many Ĥanafī scholars ruled such a person as kāfir; others withheld from takfīr.[222]
8. If a person rejects[223] – or refuses to accept – that Abū Bakr ﷺ and Úmar ﷺ were caliphs and imāms of the nation, he is a kāfir.
9. A person who insults any companion is a fāsiq and heretic by ijmāá; except when he deems it permissible and believes that cursing the companions merits reward – like some shīáh – or believes that [all] companions were kāfirs; such a person is kāfir by ijmāá.[224]
10. Some prominent ĥadīth scholars – and a group of Ĥanbalī scholars – consider Khawārij as kāfir for renouncing Álī ﷺ and Úthmān ﷺ; and those Rāfiđīs who accuse all the companions of having become kāfir.[225]

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[218] Muĥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Firyābī [d.212 AH].

[219] Apart from mere disparaging of Ṣaĥābah, Rāfiđīs have many weird beliefs which contradict necessary requirements of faith; see *Radd al-Rifđah* of Imām Aĥmed Riđā. Some believe in transmigration of souls and others believe in divinity of Aāl al-Bayt.

[220] In Sūrah Nūr; *qadhaf*: accusation of adultery.

[221] Like the Kuhayliyyah among the Rawafiđ; Qāđī Íyāđ says that those who say that the entire ummah has gone astray or make takfīr of ***all*** the companions of the Prophet ﷺ, are kāfirs.

[222] Some scholars said that a person becomes kāfir only if he believes that it is permissible to curse or insult the Shaykhayn; and if he curses or insults them in spite of acknowledging that it is impermissible, he is a fasiq.

[223] This is after the ijmāá has been established; there are reports that a companion or two did not accept the caliphate of Abū Bakr, but that was prior to unanimous agreement of the best people in this ummah – which includes Álī ibn Abi Ţālib.

[224] Ibn Áābidīn Cf. Álī al-Qārī, *Tanbīh*, p367.

[225] *Ṣārim*, Ibn Taymiyyah, p543.

Ibn Áābidīn explaining the rationale for takfīr of those who deem cursing the Shaykhayn permissible, says that it is Ĥarām to backbite or curse and those who deem it permissible are violating a necessary precept;[226] secondly, there is an ijmāá upon this. In spite of that being a kufr in itself, we do not rule a person kāfir as long as his position is based on erroneous interpretation:

> **In summary**: Those who are ruled kāfir due to their bidáh, is when that bidáh opposes an absolute proof [*dalīl qaţýī*] where errors of interpretation are inadmissible. For example, rejecting a verse of the Qur'ān, or belying a prophet, or rejecting one of the fundamental precepts [*arkān*] of Islām, etc. This is in contrary to those who believe that Álī was more rightful of khilāfah and therefore they disparage companions and accuse them of preventing Álī from taking his right. The conservative position is the latter group will not be ruled kāfir, even though that belief of theirs is kufr in itself; that is, if a person's belief in it is not due to erroneous interpretation, he shall be ruled kāfir.[227]

After discussing the issue at length, Ibn Áābidīn insists that the preferred position is that a person who insults the Shaykhayn is not a kāfir but a fāsiq whose testimony is not accepted; the position that such a person is kāfir is a weak one and fatwā is not given according to it. Aĥmad ibn Yūnus said: If a Jew slaughters a lamb and a Rāfiđī slaughters one, I would eat the slaughter of the Jew and I will not eat the slaughter of the Rāfiđī as he is an apostate. Similarly Abū Bakr ibn Haniy said: The slaughter of Qadariyyah and Rawāfiđ cannot be eaten just like the slaughter of an apostate – even though we eat from the slaughter of a Jew or a Christian.

Concerning a person who, along with disparaging companions also believes that Álī ﷺ is god; or that he was a prophet and Jibrīl ﷺ made a mistake in delivering the message; there is no doubt in the kufr of such a person. Indeed, there is no doubt in the kufr of a person who hesitates to consider such a person kāfir.[228]

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O Allāh! You know that the extent of my knowledge and my understanding is only this much; and that [I seek not to] exonerate anyone – thus I have understood the tradition of your Prophet ﷺ, and his character, his forgiveness, mercy, sympathy and kindness. Every good we attain in this world or in the hereafter is through him ﷺ. We ask Allāh táālā for a graceful and a faithful end – in wellbeing sans hardship or grief; and also for our ancestors, parents, progeny and family members – [may Allāh táālā accept this] by His immense Grace and Divine Favour; indeed, He is Closer and He accepts prayer.[229]

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[226] It is a necessary precept or *đarurī*, to consider *ghībah*, or backbiting as *ĥarām*.

[227] *Tanbīh*, p363.

[228] *Şārim*, p559.

[229] *Sayf al-Maslūl*, p211. A sentence mentioning the ijtihād of the imām is omitted so this can be my prayer as well.

IV. FALLACIES IN THE FRAMEWORK

***Al-Dīnu al-naṣīĥah**.This religion is all about good advice. Advice for the general Muslim means, to guide them towards what is good for them; to aid them in their religious and worldly matters by word and deed; to warn the neglectful among them and teach the ignorant; to support the needy and cover what is exposed, to ward off harm from them and to strive for their benefit in religion and worldly affairs.*[230]

Keller's tract begins with a very important question:

> Is someone who has an idea that is kufr or "unbelief" thereby an unbeliever?

The short answer, as Keller says is indeed "not necessarily." We read this in fiqh books, as Imām Aĥmad Riđā mentions this principle often in his refutation of various heresies, because he himself avoids takfīr unless inevitable, as he prefers the safer route:

> The well-researched position is that which we have mentioned many times: there is a [big] difference between something being kufr and to rule someone a kāfir because of it.[231]

Ibn Áābidīn explaining the basis of takfīr of those who insult *Shaykhayn* says:

> The conservative position is that the latter group will not be ruled kāfir, even though that belief of theirs is kufr in itself; that is, if a person's belief in it is not due to an erroneous interpretation, he shall be ruled kāfir.[232]

While it is necessary to warn people from takfīr – it is far more important to warn them about the dangers of apostasy. Indeed, the lengthy descriptions of kufr/takfīr in books of fiqh are meant to highlight this aspect and for people to learn and save their īmān. The Ĥanafī imām, Badr al-Rashīd explaining the reason for writing his book, *Words that Cause Apostasy* says:

> I have overheard [some] among the elite, those famed as scholars, well-established,[233] lauded in gatherings and honoured with high posts, and those well-known as teachers and muftīs; [I have heard] such people utter things that do not behoove an ornery ignoramus; nor would a lowly commoner say such things.[234]

In an age like ours, where even schoolboys have an opinion in religious matters, scholars should be responsible; giving them false assurance that it is not easy to become an apostate, encourages effrontery:

> From the very simplicity of entering Islām, many Muslims assume that the criterion for leaving it, for *kufr*, must be equally simple. It is not.

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[230] *Ikmāl al-Múlim*, Qāđī Íyāđ, 1/307.

[231] *Mustanad*, Footnote #357: Difference between *kufr* and *ikfār*.

[232] *Tanbīh*, p363.

[233] *inkharaṭa fi'l silk*: to be entrenched and have access; *intiżam, dukhūl*. Zabīdī quotes his shaykh that masters like Sakkākī and Zamakhsharī have used it, even though the idiom is not found in the speech of Arabs [*Tāj al-Árūs*, 19/247].

[234] *Alfāż al-Kufr*, Badruddīn al-Rashīd, p18.

What does he mean? Does he mean that it is very difficult to go out of Islām? Does he mean that regardless of what one says or does, he still remains a Muslim? Haytamī affirms that Shāfiýīs agree with the following opinion:

> A Ĥanafī scholar has said: Know, that whoever utters a statement of disbelief will be ruled as a kāfir, even if he does not believe that it is a statement of disbelief; the excuse of being ignorant will not be accepted.[235]

If a commoner says something ugly and he does not believe in its literal meaning; and the muftī knows that a valid explanation exists, he is yet advised to be stern with him and reprimand him:

> It is reported from Ibn Ábbās that a person came to him asking whether there is repentance for a murderer, and he said: "There is no repentance for him." Another person asked him the same question and he said: "Yes, his repentance is valid." And then he said: "I saw the intention of murder in the eyes of the first person and therefore I forbade him; and the other person was remorseful about his sin and I did not want him to lose hope."[236]

Things Not Everyone Knows

Blasphemy is excluded from this excuse. If a person insults the Prophet ﷺ or disrespects him, he becomes an apostate and his excuse of ignorance is inadmissible as we have seen earlier:

> {**Any excuse is not admissible**} of a blasphemer {**citing ignorance**} because no one can be excused for committing kufr claiming that he did not know...[237]

No position upon which one scholar may disagree with another because of evidence from the Qur'an, hadith, or human reason (as opposed to emotive preference) may be a criterion for faith or unfaith (kufr), provided it *is* a scholarly position,

We do not argue against the principle in general; however, the author prepares the reader for his insinuation later that takfīr made by Alahazrat is an emotive preference and the whole issue is a matter of scholarly difference. One should remember that we cannot brook any difference in core principles – or the Essentials – and there is an ijmāá that the person disrespecting the Prophet ﷺ is an apostate. If the offensive word or deed of a person is established to be true – that the person has certainly said or written things deemed blasphemy – that person is an apostate. The only 'scope' for difference would be the debate whether such statements were explicitly blasphemous or any valid interpretation can be found to absolve him of that charge.

The first thing to know about declaring someone an unbeliever is that the 'aqida or "Islamic belief" of anyone who has spoken the Testification of Faith "There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah," is legally valid until incontrovertibly proven otherwise.

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[235] *Iýlām*, p109.

[236] *Iýlām*, p17.

[237] *Sharĥ al-Ṣaghīr*, 4/439 vide appendix of *Sayf* p591.

By ijmāá, blasphemy of the Prophet ﷺ, is deemed contravening Essentials and the testimony of faith.

> [Hārūn] Rashīd asked Imām Mālik about a blasphemer who insulted the Prophet and told him that some scholars of Iraq issued a fatwā that he should be lashed; Mālik was enraged and he said: "O Commander of the Faithful! What else remains [for] the nation after its Prophet has been disparaged?"[238]

Haytamī mentions the ijmāá on the apostasy of the blasphemer:

> There is an ijmāá of this nation that a Muslim who disparages or insults the Prophent shall be executed; and those who mentioned this ijmāá are Ibn al-Mundhir, Khaṭṭābī, Muĥammad ibn Saĥnūn and others[239]

Citing from *Mawāqif* and its commentary, he further says:

> Whoever attests [to the truth] of the message of the Prophet and together prostrates to the sun is not a believer by ijmāá because his prostration to the sun proves that it is apparent that he has not truly believed in the message; and we rule only on what is apparent...[240]

Imām Subkī says that disbelief is of two kinds: the first is borne of ignorance and rejection and the second is due to elements that contradict the claim, in spite of accepting and attesting to the truth:

> ...and the kufr of the blasphemer – in spite of his claim that he attests to the truth of Islām and is cognisant of its commandments – is of the latter category. There is no doubt in the kufr of such a person, regardless of his considering [his blasphemous statement] permissible or impermissible; regardless of knowledge or ignorance. The scholar who was reluctant [to do takfir] and did not consider it kufr unless the blasphemer deemed it permissible did not understand the basis of takfīr and the principle: 'denigration contradicts reverence; and reverence is the pre-condition for faith'.[241]

It may appear as needless quibbling, but we shall see how the author uses these principles in his defence of Deobandis and veers away from their original context. Concerning the ĥadīth of Usamah ibn Zayd who killed a man after he had said 'lā ilāha illā Allāh' and the Prophet ﷺ reproached him until –

> He said, "Why didn't you split him open to see if his heart really said it or not?"—and he kept repeating this till I wished I had not become a Muslim before that day[242]

Keller explains the conclusion drawn from this ĥadīth, thus:

> indeed it was almost absurd to believe otherwise—the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) sternly condemned Usama for not taking the outward sign of Islam at face value, establishing for all time that the primary and ongoing presumption (asl) for another Muslim's Islamic belief ('aqida) is that it is sound and acceptable, until there is incontestable proof that it is otherwise.

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[238] *Shifā*, p360.

[239] *Iýlām*, p112.

[240] Ibid., p20.

[241] *Sayf al-Maslūl*, p414; See Alahazrat's *Tamhīd e Īmān* for a detailed explanation of the fundamental principle: Reverence is the pre-condition for faith.

[242] *Ṣaĥīĥ Muslim* 1/96-97. In the lengthier version of the ĥadīth, that man was a combatant who was killing and maiming other Muslim soldiers who approached him; when Usāmah raised his sword to kill him when he had the opportunity, the man uttered the kalimah, but Usāmah brought down the sword killing him.

According to Imām Māzari and Qāđī Íyāđ, notwithstanding the reprimand, the Prophet ﷺ did not impose *qiṣāṣ* or levy blood-money – because Usāmah had killed him due to an erroneous interpretation. It is also possible that the Prophet ﷺ knew by revelation that the person *was* indeed a kāfir and he had only said the kalimah to save his skin – therefore he did not impose penalties on Usāmah but his reprimand was to prevent any such occurrence in the future. And most importantly, in the words of the Qāđī:

> In it is proof that people will be dealt according to what is observed externally, because there is no way we can know about their intentions; and none knows this except He who Knows [all] secrets.[243]

Similarly, in the case of blasphemy or apostasy, the ruling is issued on what is observed externally even if the blasphemer protests that internally, he did not have that intention:

> Because someone is ruled kāfir based on what is observed from the outside; it is not possble to know his motives or intentions, nor consider the context in which he has said so. However, the excuse of a person who claims that he did not know will be accepted according to the state and conditions of his Islām.[244]

> "Whoever charges a believer with unbelief is as though he had killed him" and,
>
> "Any man who says, 'O kafir" to his brother, one of them deserves the name"

No doubt, it is an enormity when said unjustly. But, if it is said based on a valid reason and not to scorn the person's Islām nor as calumny, the person who makes takfīr of another does not automatically become a kāfir. Rampant takfīr should be discouraged, but there is no harm in stating the legal ruling that a blasphemer is a kāfir. This warning should not be misused to prevent legitimate takfīr – such as takfīr of Qādiyānīs or modern libertarian groups that reject Essentials of religion.

> In Muslim society, such a judgement is the business of the qadi or Islamic judge alone, and only because he has to....

This is true for individual cases. But if a group of people say such things – or leaders of a group have said such things, it becomes necessary for everyone who learns about it to warn others, after prominent muftīs or qāđīs have already issued a ruling. Particularly, when such things are written in books and are freely retold by common people, this need becomes even more pressing:

> If the person who uttered [such blasphemies] is a person known to be a scholar or a teacher, [a shaykh or a muftī], or a ĥadīth scholar and narrator, or a person in authority or known to be a reliable witness, or a well-known jurist – then it is obligatory for whosoever hears [such a thing from him] to expose him and make the public aware of what has been heard from him – and to make people abhor that person...
>
> ... Similarly, if that person [who has uttered a blasphemy] is a preacher or a schoolmaster; if these be the things in his heart, then how can he be trusted to teach the love and reverence of RasūlAllāh ﷺ to those in his care or to his audience? It is definitely obligatory to publicise the blasphemies of such people – for the right of the Prophet ﷺ and the right of the Sharīáh.[245]

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[243] *Ikmāl al-Múlim*, Qāđī Íyāđ, 1/371.

[244] *Iýlām*, p82.

[245] *Shifā*, p371.

It is necessary to tell others, that a person is a kāfir if he accuses Sayyidah Āýishah of adultery; a person is a kāfir if he blasphemes against the Prophet ﷺ; a person who denies any verse of the Qur'ān is a kāfir; or a person who believes that Allāh táālā is corporeal is a kāfir. There is no harm in common people telling others that the Nuşayrīs of Syria or the Bāţinīs are kāfirs; these debates are long over – and common people can tell one another to keep away from Ismāýīlīs and Nuşayrīs.

> Ordinary Muslims other than the qāđī are not required to judge the faith in the heart of anyone...

Keller confuses problematic or complex cases which require a qāđī's opinion with simple cases and generalises it as 'judging' the faith of another. We have described earlier that everything is based on the apparent – violation of fundamental articles of faith is kufr and it does not require a qāđī to certify such things. If a person claims that Mirzā of Qādiyān is a prophet, a Muslim should right away deem him a kāfir. Similarly, a person becomes a kāfir if he explicitly insults the Prophet ﷺ; the qāđī or a muftī will be called upon only where ambiguity exists or when it is a novel thing requiring an expert's review.

> It is definitely obligatory to publicise the blasphemies of such people – for the right of the Prophet ﷺ and the right of the sharīáh. If the blasphemer is not a scholar or a person of religious authority, even then defending the right of the Prophet and guarding his honour is a religious duty...[246]

Keller also confuses between Ĥadd for an apostate and how Muslims should deal with an apostate:

> ..ordinary Muslims may neither judge nor carry out the worldly consequences of such legal rulings because they have no authority to do so, for Islām does not permit vigilante or mob "justice."

The above restriction is only for carrying out punishments such as executions – but it is the collective responsibility of all Muslims to be watchful and boycott individuals from the community who spread heresies or those who have become apostates; if it is nobody else's business, then people should happily give their daughters to apostates in marriage and continue dealing with them – it is nobody's business to judge the faith in his heart. Keller lists a number of 'motives' why people do takfīr:

> The motives today behind careless accusations of unbelief made by Muslims are many,

Keller must have split open the chests of all these Muslims to decide that people should be either hankering for fame or full of malice, envy or arrogance. But one may object that Keller is only mentioning the motives – he has not accused anyone, let alone generalise. Or didn't he?

> (d) the most common motives discernable in our times for declaring others unbelievers are morally repugnant, and themselves sins;

[246] Ibid.

In other words, it is necessary to have good faith of a person who is careless in his speech and even utter blasphemies or disrespect the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, leaving the qāḍī to deal with it; but if anyone dares to criticise a blasphemer or consider blasphemy as kufr, he must either be hungry for glory and fame or a malcontent. It is indeed an audacious suggestion, but which of the following motives prompted Keller to write his *Īmān, Kufr and Takfīr*?

- a desire to warn or educate Muslims;
- the need to put oneself up by putting someone else down;
- thirst for fame as a "scholar";
- the feeling of power through frightening those one informs;
- the thrill of their need to resort to one's knowledge to get all the details;
- the need to prove one's group is superior to anyone else;
- malice, envy, or arrogance.

If it is only the first, then by what rights does he accuse others – expressly or implied – that their criticism is borne of malice, envy or arrogance? The reader must remember this, because it is the background upon which Keller tries to paint the takfīr of Deobandis. It may sound incredible to some readers but here is an example of such an implication:

> Now, the temperament of Ahmad Reza Khān, with his acknowledged brilliance, doubtless played a role in this judgement,

We do not know which other groups Keller had in mind; but Sunnis of the subcontinent, whom he calls 'Barelwis,' were definitely on the agenda.

> They culminated in a number of fatwas published by Ahmad Reza Khan Barelwi of the takfir of major Deobandi ulema of his times,

> In comparison, no Deobandi scholar of note, to the author's knowledge, has yet made takfir of Barelwis.

Coming back to our discussion,

> We say that such a proof must be "publicly observable" because the above-mentioned hadith of Usama ibn Zayd, according to Nawawi, "attests to the well known principle of fiqh and legal methodology that rulings are based upon outward evidence, while Allah is responsible for the inward"

This is a very important point and we do not debate its validity. In the case of Deobandis, blasphemous statements were written by their elders and published; and even after refutation and condemnation by scholars, those statements were and are repeated to this day; nor was there any regret or remorse on the part of authors – rather they justified those statements and those books have received multiple editions – what further 'publicly observable' proof is required?

> (b) it is not the legal obligation of the ordinary Muslim to judge another's faith, but rather that of the qadi, in public cases where this-worldly interests dictate that it must be legally decided;

When a qāđī or a muftī has already issued a ruling and the case is well known and established, common people can refer to that judgement in their dealings. Similarly, things which are explicit or implied insults and disrespectful to the Master ﷺ are kufr and one should deem such things kufr, even if one does not make takfīr deferring it to the judgement of the qāđī, as we have described earlier.

> e) to their own personal sin, factions who declare others unbelievers add the onus of sinning against the Umma through sectarianism, the sunna of the Christians whom the Qur'an says Allah afflicted with enmity and hatred for each other as punishment for forgetting their religion;

Certainly, making takfīr on issues which are not essentials of religion is sectarianism and a crime against the ummah; but it is a religious duty to make takfīr of groups that commit blasphemy against the Prophet ﷺ or insult previous prophets; for example, warning against Qādiyānīs, who themselves claim to be a sect of Islām. The above rule is not absolute – otherwise, rulings of *takfīr* and *tabdīý* by major imāms should be classed as sectarianism and 'sinning against the Ummah'.

The next section is about words that entail a person leaving Islām –which we have described in detail earlier. Here, Keller says:

> ...and shows how far the loose accusations of kufr echoing back and forth on the Islamic scene today are from the standards of Islamic law.

Keller agrees that any of the twelve criteria listed [vide *Hadiyyah*] can be grounds for takfīr and the tenth criterion is blasphemy against prophets. Should we scorn a Muslim if he makes takfīr of a person who meets any of these criteria? Is it necessary for a qāđī not to rule a person kāfir even if such a person says or does something that would meet these criteria? Is it sectarianism to consider such a person as kāfir? Is it illegal and unislamic to boycott such a person or to consider his slaughter as carrion? Is it permissible to give one's daughter in marriage to such a person? In his eagerness to generalise, Keller has sidelined legitimate reasons of takfīr.

> These legal criteria, with the foregoing parts of this essay, reveal a number of fallacies in the reckless charges of unbelief bandied about in our times...

So what is wrong here?

Notice that Keller subtly hints that the takfīr of Deobandi elders made by Sunni scholars in the subcontinent is excluded from the twelve criteria – together with the insinuation of 'motives for takfīr' he has listed earlier. He then proceeds to explain three examples of fallacies of takfīr, which we shall examine presently.

Our elders were far more sympathetic even to the Khawārij, who were the biggest takfirīs of all time when they said that the takfīr made by Khawārij was because of erroneous interpretation. But according to Keller, most who do takfīr in our times enjoy ruling others kāfir because it gives them the feeling of power by frightening others or because they simply envy others. Such generalisations may be difficult to prove, but Keller is confident that most people do not have good intentions at heart.

> The Fallacy of Hearsay Evidence

Before we analyse Keller's exposition, we remind him of this verse:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفۡعَلُونَ

O ye who believe: why do you say that which you do not do yourselves?[247]

How many books on the Barelwi-Deobandi conflict did Keller peruse? Or did he content himself with what others have to say? We know that he has Deobandi murīds and that he meets Deobandi scholars, but how many Sunni/Barelwi scholars did he meet and ask for clarifications on this topic? Which books of Alahazrat did he read – and how many were originals? The Prophet ﷺ said: "It is lying enough for a man to repeat everything he hears".

> Accepting hearsay evidence against people is forbidden by Allah Most High, who says, "O you who believe: when a corrupt person brings you news, verify it, lest you harm people out of ignorance and come to regret what you have done"

His explanation ignores the key clause in this verse: "corrupt person." Like the rest of his article, he quotes and explains Ĥadīth and verses without regard to their context or compatibility with commentaries. If we accept the above assertion, we will have to chuck out all the lone-narrator reports and criticism of narrators, which would be the bulk of Ĥadīth literature. Imām Qurṭubī writes:

> Secondly: This verse is proof for the acceptance of lone-narrator reports, as long as that narrator is upright and trustworthy [*ádl*] because it stipulates verification of the news brought by a corrupt person. Because 'information' is a trust and [the attribute of] corruption invalidates it.[248]

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[247] Sūrah Ṣaff, 61:2.

[248] *Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*, 49:6. Though entirely unrelated to our discussion here, Imām Qurṭubī mentions a very fine point on the *fāsiq* leading congregational prayers: "Ibn al-Árabī said: It is surprising that Imām Shāfiýī and others considered the fāsiq being imām as permissible. When a [fāsiq] cannot be trusted with a few pennies of this world, how can he be trusted with treasures of the din?"

Ibn Kathīr in his tafsīr of the same verse:

> A group of scholars considered this as proof for rejecting reports of an unknown narrator, due to the possibility of his being a fāsiq; but others accepted it and said: we are commanded to verify the report of a [known] fāsiq, and here we are merely unaware of the state of that narrator.

Thus, we learn that it is permissible to rely and report opinions of scholars who are accepted in the community as upright and trustworthy, attested by other contemporary scholars. Many rulings in madh'habs are based on lone-narrator reports from companions of imāms like Shāfiýī and Mālik; and for many secondary and tertiary issues, the imāms themselves are the only available sources for legislation.

Whatever Keller says about 'hearsay evidence' is true for the case of ***corrupt*** people; when a major muftī or a scholar investigates a matter and issues a ruling which is also attested by contemporary scholars – dismissing that ruling as 'hearsay evidence' is ignorance or insolence.

> Moreover, if the individual then denies that he has made such a statement, he is legally considered as having repented of it

The 'nuance' that is ignored here is, mere denial is insufficient if it is proven that the person has uttered blasphemy or if he agrees that he has said such a thing. In which case, he will have to expressly disavow such a thing and renew his faith. Strangely, Keller cites a concise Ĥanafī text,[249] whereas Haytamī's commentary accords more clarity:

> If two [men bear] witness that a person has committed apostasy and explain [what he has done] it is not sufficient if he says: "I am a Muslim." It is necessary for him to repeat the two shahadah and acknowledge that what he has done is wrong and [expressly] disavow everything contradicting the religion of Islām.[250]

The above is a commentary on Imām Nawawī's *Minhāj*, where he says that according to one opinion, the testimony against a person accusing him of apostasy is absolutely admissible and he will be requisitioned to repent; the second opinion requires the witnesses to clarify and explain what he has done and in this case, if it is proven, mere denial is insufficient; disavowal is a must. Blasphemous passages written by Deobandis were highlighted and refuted by Sunni scholars; the accused claimed that they did not intend blasphemy – despite those statements being explicit. Neither did they attempt to alter[251] those passages, but wrote clarifications instead. Deobandis do not deny[252] that such statements were written, they contest the 'intended' meaning of

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[249] *Mukhtaṣar al-Taĥāwī* is one of the basic texts in the Ĥanafī madh'hab; the work is from a righteous age when such issues were rare and early authors did not elaborate on them; we find lengthier explanations in works of later scholars as a response to the need of the times. Secondly, the work of Imām Ibn Ĥajar al-Haytamī on apostasy and takfīr is considered as an authoritative text by everybody who came after him – one would expect Keller, being a Shāfiýī, to cite from his commentary. Even if he chose Ĥanafī texts – perhaps, because he deals with Ĥanafīs and takfīr later in his work – why not *Radd al-Muĥtār*?

[250] *Tuĥfatu'l Muĥtāj bi Sharĥ al-Minhāj*, Ibn Ĥajar al-Haytamī, 9/95.

[251] Thānawī agreed to alter his blasphemous passage in *Taghyīr al-Únwān* but without any retraction or repentance for the blasphemous passage written previously; rather, he insisted that it was valid. The date on this letter is 18th Ṣafar 1342.

[252] At least those who proffer explanations acknowledge that such passages exist in their books; some others deny it altogether – either out of ignorance or deception – that their elders never wrote such a thing.

those statements. The foremost 'denial' of Deobandis is in the form of *Muhannad*, where Khalīl Aĥmad denies a number of things – even though such things exist in their books and are printed until now.

> In the world in which we live, not everyone is well-intentioned, especially towards those who are envied for their accomplishments or possessions.

While true in itself, the statement does not mean that every criticism is because of jealousy. Deobandis make a similar charge against Alahazrat – that he was envious of Deobandis and therefore ruled them kāfir. Even when facts stare in the face – that Alahazrat was far superior to anybody known as a scholar in his time, especially in India – and that he belonged to a prominent family of scholars and nobles, his chains of authority in ĥadīth and fiqh were at par if not higher than his contemporaries, his command of languages and the exquisite style in which he wrote, the copiousness with which he referenced remains peerless to this day; why would he be jealous of people lesser than him? Did Imām Subki and other scholars refute Ibn Taymiyyah, due to envy? Incidentally, that was the charge Ibn Taymiyyah also made against his critics.

> Those familiar with testimony in court know how frequently even well-intentioned eyewitnesses contradict each other and, upon cross-examination, themselves.

How many people did Keller consult on the Deobandi-Barelwi issue? If he knows Urdu, then let him state himself how many books of both Deobandis and Barelwis did he read? Did he cross-examine those who fed him Deobandi propaganda, or was it enough to be content with hearsay evidence in this matter?

> Reporters sometimes get things wrong, eliminate nuances that indicate the context, or misunderstand the person they interview to improve the story line or reader interest, or to make things "fit" with received ideas…

Deobandis make a similar charge against Alahazrat: that he modified writings of Deobandis to give it a twist not intended by the authors. We will assume heedlessness and ignorance on the part of Keller than chutzpah, when he regularly thrashes and steamrollers over simple principles of fiqh and yet speaks as if he is above such things.

> As for judging the belief or unbelief of a particular historical individual of the past who ostensibly died as a Muslim, it is no one's responsibility, since the dead no longer stand in our dock.

True, the dead no longer stand on our dock – but if they are leaders of a faction, or such whose statements are deemed authority for that faction, and if such statements are either heresy or kufr, it is obligatory for scholars to refute them. Ibn Taymiyyah's heresies are refuted to this day – even Keller has refuted them in his earlier writings. If this is absolute, then Keller should boldly proclaim that Qādiyānīs are Muslims – and forbid Muslims from making takfīr or refute Mirzā's claims. Perhaps Qāđī Íyāđ did not have a teacher of Islamic etiquette like Keller, because he has said:

> If the person who uttered [such blasphemies] is a person known to be a scholar or a teacher, [a shaykh or a muftī], or a ĥadīth scholar and narrator, or a person in authority or known to be a reliable witness or a well-

known jurist – then it is obligatory for whosoever hears [such a thing from him] to expose him and make the public aware of what has been heard from him – and to make people dislike such a person, to bear witness against such a person and what he has said; it is obligatory for scholars and leaders in the Muslim community to repudiate such a person and clearly communicate the kufr of this person and the monstrosity of his ugly speech so that Muslims are safeguarded from the evil of such a person – and the right of the Leader of Messengers ﷺ is well established.[253]

However, when a physical individual is gone, his "historical person" remains in the form of his written works, and it is this that ulema sometimes warn Muslims about when they mention "the kufr of So-and-so," intending not his person, but the historical personality that his written legacy has effectively become

Once again, Keller makes up his own rules upon requirement. If a person utters or writes blasphemies or something that causes apostasy – he is a kāfir and will be considered a kāfir. However, if this is about historical individuals who are accused of having said or written something – and we do not have conclusive information that they might have really said that; or if there is a probability of tampering in their books – like that of Ibn Árabī; or if there is a possibility of a valid meaning which is not kufr, but the authors are not around to explain them; or if there is a possibility that they might have repented from those heresies; in all such cases, scholars would give such a person the benefit of doubt and would refute the kufr of such a person's saying, but abstain from making takfīr. Alahazrat withheld from takfīr of Ismāýīl Dihlawī, because there was a rumour in educated circles that Ismāýīl had repented from his heresies; therefore Alahazrat refuted Ismāýīl's statements which are undoubtedly those of Ismāýīl and it is well established that there is no tampering in such works – because his admirers defend it to this day. In *Kawkabatu'sh Shihābiyyah* after listing 70 statements which amount to kufr in the said Dihlawī's writings, Alahazrat abstains from takfīr and says:

> In my opinion, the state of utmost caution bids us to withhold our tongue from declaring him as kāfir; and this is the preferred and most suitable opinion.[254] Allāh táālā knows best.

Similarly, in *Sall al-Suyūf al-Hindiyyah*, *Izālatu'l Áār* and *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ*, Alahazrat rules a number of statements as kufr, but withholds from takfīr of Ismāýīl.

This is legally quite a different thing from judging the author himself. Why? Because whoever surveys something of the vast corpus of Islamic manuscripts extant realizes how many works, even some of more important, are without rigorous authentication from their authors

This was true of a bygone age – an age when means of communication were rudimentary and books were handwritten. If, say a person in London wrote a book, another copyist in Paris could tamper with it, without the knowledge of the author. Even in the same city or province, books could be tampered as Keller mentions the incident of Imām Shárānī. But in our time and in the past 200 years when books have been printed in the author's lifetime, and when such works have received multiple editions; when certain printed books were criticised by prominent scholars of that age and the authors themselves tried to explain their own standpoint

[253] *Shifā*, p371.

[254] *hamāre nazdīk maqām e iĥtiyāt meiñ ikfār sey kaff-e-lisān ma'khūz o mukhtār o munāsib.*

and defended what they wrote, such an excuse is far-fetched. Would Keller dare to say that Mirzā Ghulām Qādiyānī should not be judged by what he wrote?

> Oftener, a judgement in print that a particular work has reached us through several copyists' hands in the form its author originally intended it represents the probabilistic expectation of the editor after collating the oldest and best manuscripts available to him. The point is that if ulema throughout Islamic history have agreed that this should not prevent Muslims from reading and benefiting from such books, they also tell us that written works that have reached us through copyists are leagues apart from the kind of forensic evidence demanded by Islamic law for judgements about a particular Muslim's belief or unbelief.

This applies only to authors whose works were copied by hand – prior to the 1700s – and where conclusive evidence of the individual's authorship is absent.

> Aside from honest mistakes, there are intentional forgeries. Faction welcomes perfidy,

The possibility of forgery is ruled out when the authors of those books acknowledge such works or passages, explicitly or implicitly themselves; by referring to them in their other works, or defending those passages. *Taĥdhīru'n Nās* of Nānotwī, *Ĥifż al-Īmān* of Thānawī, *Barāhīn al-Qāṭiáh* of Khalīl Aĥmad are all works of respective authors and the controversial passages are never claimed to be forged. The fatwā of Gangohī, however is disputed by later Deobandis and claimed to be a forgery – yet, Gangohī did not deny it himself; his followers point out OTHER fatāwā to prove Gangohī's actual belief, but there is no explicit denial of Gangohī of that fatwā, even though it was reproduced by his critics and publicly decried in his own lifetime, and takfīr was also made by his critics on this issue. There is not a single statement of Gangohī that explicitly repudiates that fatwā or simply says: "That fatwā is not mine". Keller's point is valid though – when Deobandis found it difficult to answer Sunni scholars, they forged passages from non-existent books and a Deobandi even published a work containing a forged fatwā attributing it to Mawlānā Naqī Álī Khān[255] in his *Hidāyatu'l Bariyyah*, puportedly published in Lahore and the Deobandi author made a mark of the seal of Mawlānā Naqī indicating 1301, even though the noble shaykh passed away in 1297. Alahazrat refuted such forgeries in his *Ab'ĥās e Akhīrah*[256]

> which said spurious interpolations had been added into it by enemies of Islam, Hanafi Imam Ibn 'Abidin says that this also happened to the Knower of Allah ['Abd al-Wahhab] al-Sha'rani,

Imam Shárānī exculpated himself from such writings and repudiated them; the example is invalid in the case of Deobandis because:

- The works containing controversial passages were published by respective authors themselves or their representatives.

[255] Mawlānā Naqī Álī is Alahazrat Imām Aĥmed Riđā Khān's father.

[256] The translation, *Closing Colloquies* will be released shortly by Ridawi Press, in-shā'Allāh.

- There was no explicit denial[257] nor did the respective authors disown such controversial passages or said that they were forgeries or wrongly attributed to them.
- All these works have been reprinted for more than 100 years – receiving multiple editions in the respective lifetimes of the authors – without any retraction of those controversial passages.
- In all cases, except that of Gangohī's fatwā, either the authors themselves defended those passages or their students and followers defend those passages; they do not deny that it was written or present in that work – they insist that the meaning is something else.

> in his chapter on usul al-din or "the bases of religion," of the example of his former sheikh Ibn Taymiya, cautioning students against losing their way in the mazes of philosophical and cosmological arguments of the ancients

As Keller has noted, Imām Dhahabī only warns students to stay away from philosophical arguments and arguing about differences of opinion of elders – but that does not include condoning blasphemy. The book *Zaghal al-Ílm* is a concise guide for a student of religion on the branches of science and caution to aspiring scholars on the dangers of certain negative traits associated with scholars of those sciences.

> Those in our day who make *takfīr* of Muslims of previous times commit the "fallacy of hearsay evidence" by ignoring both the forensic standards of Islām…

Keller repeats this fancy rule in absolute terms and generalises it. How many people make takfīr of previous Muslims and on what counts? Is the witness of a number of qualified muftīs admissible or should it be considered hearsay? Mirzā of Qādiyān and his blasphemies and indeed, his claim to prophethood – do they fulfil the 'forensic' standards as described by Keller, or should they be deemed 'hearsay'? But wait, Keller does mention printed books:

> We have not mentioned the comparatively recent phenomenon of printed books…
>
> But it should be noted that if there is any statement in an author's printed work that seems to be *kufr*, it must be plainly expressed, not merely implied, for otherwise the accuser has committed another fallacy, to which we now turn.

We will not argue about the sharaýī standard which requires registration with the LoC or British Library, but only highlight Keller's knack of overturning any concept and use it for a contrary purpose. Copyright is a legal device to protect an author's claim of ownership – but the converse is not necessarily true. If a copyright does not exist, it does not mean that the work does not belong to that author. Publication was mandatory to obtain

[257] This may sound contradictory because Khalīl Aĥmed *denied* some of those in his *Muhannad*. A more accurate statement would be: "Even though Khalīl Aĥmed denied it in front of Arab scholars, he or his followers did not deny or disclaim such statements in India, but rather defended and wrote volumes to explain what those words REALLY mean. As soon as the weather was conducive in Ĥijāz for Wahābīs, he 'retracted' from *Muhannad*; such a hypocrite is celebrated as a ĥadīth exegete.

federal copyright, according to Copyright Law of 1909.[258] If a book is published and attributed to a person, who acknowledges its authorship and does not deny it; and if such a thing is common knowledge, such a case does not fall in the fancy 'hearsay' category of Shaykh Keller. However, there are two truths in Keller's above passage.

The author is culpable for statements in a book:

- if his authorship is established;
- and for statements which are express and unambiguous,

which he reiterates:

> If an utterance is unambiguous and its context plain, there is normally only one possible intention

We have no disagreement with the above; now, Keller quotes Ibn Áābidīn thus:

> A fatwa may not be given of the unbelief of a Muslim whose words are interpretable as having a valid meaning, or about the unbelief of which there is a difference of scholarly opinion, even if weak.

And mentions the following intermediate conclusion:

> Only when the intention entails kufr do such words take the speaker out of Islam.

This is not absolute, and is valid only in cases of ambiguity. Keller is mixing up things, even if it is unintentional: First, he mentions that express statements are taken face-value; second, he mentions how to deal with ambiguous or statements open to interpretation; and third, he switches to the intention of the speaker – notice that the above statement suppresses the 'nuance' that regardless of intention, when explicit, express and unambiguous statements of kufr are uttered, that person becomes an apostate – and his protestation of innocence, ignorance or other-intentions are inadmissible. Imām Ĥaskafī says:

> ...he who utters a word of kufr lightly[259] becomes an apostate even if he does not believe in what he has uttered; because of slighting [the religion] and therefore is similar to kufr of obstinacy.[260]

Commenting on the above, Ibn Áābidīn says:

> {**one who utters a word of kufr in a trifling manner**} that is, when he utters it of his own volition, even if he does not intend the meaning of those words.

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[258] http://www.copyright.gov See the document *Copyright Basics*.

[259] *hazala*: to say something in jest, jokingly, playfully; saying something lightly, frivolously or in a trifling manner.

[260] *Durr al-Mukhtār*, 344; *kufr ínād*: Similar to the kufr of a person who acknowledges the truth in his heart, but does not utter the two testimonies of faith – due to obduracy or deliberate opposition [*Radd al-Muĥtār* 4/407].

> …because the Lawgiver has determined certain sins to be indicative of a lack of [faith] such as the trifling manner mentioned above; similar to a person who prostrates to an idol or throws a copy of the Qur'ān in garbage – such a person is a kāfir, even if he attests to the truth of Islām.

He further says:

> I say: It is obvious that if the indicators of mockery or slighting [religion] are found, that person will be ruled kāfir; even if he has not intended to mock or slight [the religion].[261]

Keller's befuddling of this sort is rampant and after a while it becomes tedious to keep sorting this out. For example, the same principle is quoted in *Hadiyyah al-Álā'yiyyah* which Keller has quoted earlier concerning things that cause kufr:

> 9. sarcasm about any ruling of Sacred Law, or quoting a statement of unbelief—even jokingly, without believing it—when one's intention is sarcasm [about religious matters];

Except that Keller states the opposite of what is intended in the text; my translation is given below:

> Or if he disparages any ruling of Sacred Law; or utters a statement of unbelief voluntarily – even jokingly, even if he does not believe in it – because of slighting religion.[262]

Whether he misunderstood the Arabic or whether he knowingly manipulated it, the chaos that follows is based on such false premises.

> Something might be said that while outwardly offensive to Allah or His messenger (Allah bless him and give him peace), was nevertheless intended by the speaker to make a valid point, not as an insult.

This may sound like a valid position of Islamic scholars – but it is patent nonsense; and it is Keller's own rule. This 'intention' for explicit insults is a Kellerian concoction brewed in kettle logic; it is hard to believe that Keller is not doing this deliberately.

> The need to contextualize words to establish their intent is even more imperative in possible utterances of kufr that insult Allah Most High or the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace).

This is contrary to the position of Islamic jurists; Qāđī Íyāđ says that the case of insulting the Prophet ﷺ is different to other cases of apostasy:

> Even if the person proves that he has not deliberately said any of this to deride him ﷺ; or intended to insult or disparage him ﷺ[263]

Ibn Ĥajar al-Haytamī commenting on the above says:

> [Qāđī Íyāđ's] opinion is obvious and confirms to the principles of our madh'hab. Because someone is ruled kāfir based on what is observed from the outside; one cannot look at his motives or intentions, nor consider the context in which he has said so.[264]

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[261] *Radd al-Muĥtār*, 4/406.

[262] *Hadiyyah al-Álā'yiyyah*, p256. *ikhtiyāran* –not accidentally, or by slip of the tongue or absentmindedly but consciously.

[263] *Shifā*, p364. See Appendix G for a full translation.

[264] *Iýlām bi Qawāţi ý al-Islām*, Haytamī, p82; also cited in the appendix of *Sayf al-Maslūl*, p591.

Taqi al-Din al-Subki says in his *al-Sayf al-maslul*, a more than five-hundred-page work on the legal consequences of insulting the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace)

Yes, Imām Subkī wrote a book of more than five-hundred pages – but did Keller read it? The main subject of this book is whether the repentance of a blasphemer is accepted or not; Shāfiýīs and Ĥanafīs accept it, Ĥanbalīs and Mālikīs do not accept it. One should bear in mind that Imām Subkī does not say that a person can commit blasphemy and remain nonchalant;[265] the debate is whether repentance is accepted and the blasphemer shall be spared execution. Keller mentions a statement of Imām Subkī and presents it as the core principle for his argument:

"Offending" however, may be either intentional or unintentional, while only if a person intends giving offense to the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) has he thereby committed kufr:

We have discussed this earlier in the chapter on blasphemy; one should remember the distinction between *adhā* – or causing hurt or offence, and *shatm/sabb* – insulting or disparaging the Prophet ﷺ. While the latter most certainly causes hurt; causing hurt does not necessarily mean that it is an insult. The case of the bedouins or the companions who caused him hurt were not insults – and as long as harm was not intended, it is not *kufr*. Scholars make this distinction concerning those who offended the Prophet ﷺ and he forgave them, for example the person who criticised him:

> ...[probably] he did not deem it as an insult, rather an offence which could be forgiven..[266]

Qārī disagrees and insists that the Prophet ﷺ certainly perceived it as criticism therefore, he ﷺ said: "Woe unto you, who will do justice if I will not." Yet, the Prophet ﷺ spared him because that is how he was commanded to do at that time. Qāđī Íyāđ says that both *adhā*/offence and *sabb*/insult will be treated as the same when concerning RasūlAllāh ﷺ. But all of this was permissible for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to forgive, not for us, nor in our times. Also, *sabb/shatm* or insulting/disparaging is kufr regardless of the intention; Imām Subkī says:

> The kufr of a blasphemer who claims that he attests and is aware [of the truth of Islām] is from this category.[267] There is no doubt in the kufr [of a blasphemer] regardless of whether he deems it permissible or not; regardless of whether he is ignorant or knowingly does so.[268]

There are scores of passages in *Sayf* where Imām Subkī mentions that the blasphemer is an apostate and this is mentioned without any exception:

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[265] Imām Subkī says:

> [The right of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ is violated by the blasphemer] and before he reverts to Islām and repents, that right will not be exempted; such a person shall be executed. However, after his [repentance] and his Islām is proven, he shall not [be executed] [*Sayf* p200].

Elsewhere, in the same book he says:

> Whoever angers him – whether by insulting him or in any such manner which we consider to be kufr, there is no doubt that such a person is executed so long as he does not accept Islām. [Ibid, p212].

[266] *Shifā*, p362.

[267] Which he mentions in a previous para, namely: kufr, regardless of knowledge and acceptance of Islam.

[268] *Sayf*, p414.

> Every insult [or blasphemy] after Islām is kufr;[269]

In one such passage discussing a finer point of the issue, he says:

> Execution is for two reasons: The first is generic, for apostasy; and second is specific for blasphemy. Because if we consider blasphemy specifically which is [also] kufr, it entails both meanings which we have mentioned here; that is: the facet of kufr in itself and the facet of blasphemy in itself; because even if we consider a hypothetical case where an insult does not merit takfīr, even then [blasphemy itself] impels execution.

And immediately clarifies – lest people like Keller run away with wild conclusions:

> When I said: "even if we consider a hypothetical case where takfīr is not made due to insult," I really meant a hypothetical case which is impossible to occur – **because there is no doubt that takfīr is made for every case of insult or blasphemy**...[270]

The subject of blasphemy is comprehensively discussed, debated and clarified; prominent scholars have mentioned it in fatāwā and even written dedicated books; but Keller hacks it mercilessly and carves an opinion which is not compatible with any madh'hab. Haytami citing Qāđī Íyāđ says:

> Even if the person proves that he has not deliberately said any of this to deride him ﷺ; or intended to insult or disparage him ﷺ – whether it was ignorance that made him say such things or because he was discontented or disgruntled, or he was inebriated, or he blurted it out without thinking or it slipped from his tongue, or because of haughtiness or impudence, or impetuousity and recklessness; in all such cases, the ruling is the same as in the first case – that is, execution without further deliberation or any hesitation, because the excuse of ignorance [in such cases] which cause apostasy is inadmissible, nor the excuse of slip of the tongue, nor any other excuse which I have mentioned above as long as the person is sane and has not lost his reason.
>
> Except a person in duress, who utters such things due to coercion – as long as faith is undisturbed in his heart. It is therefore, that the Andalusian scholars decreed against Ibn Ĥātim when he repudiated the zuhd of RasūlAllāh ﷺ, as mentioned earlier.[271]

Let Keller present any scholar who has disagreed with the above summary; in fact, Haytami reiterates in his comments after citing the above:

> [Qāđī Íyāđ's] opinion is obvious and confirms to the principles of our madh'hab. Because someone is ruled kāfir based on what is observed from the outside; one cannot look[272] at his motives or intentions, nor consider the context in which he has said so. However, the excuse of a person who claims that he did not know will be accepted according to the state and conditions of his Islām.[273]
>
> His excuse will also be accepted if he claims that it was a slip of the tongue – only to ward off the death penalty, even though it is not accepted in the matter of divorce and manumission; because the former is the right of Allāh táālā to forgive and the latter two require forgiveness of humans.[274]

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[269] Ibid. p187.

[270] Ibid. 205 Emphasis mine.

[271] *Iýlām*, p82; *Shifā*, p364.

[272] Obviously, it is not possible to know what is in their hearts.

[273] Literally: to his closeness or distance to Islām. The shaykh means that if he is a recent revert, or someone who does not have easy access to scholars, such as a child of Muslim parents in non-Islamic lands where exposure to Islām is far less and found only in enclaves.

[274] *Iýlām*, p82.

Concerning the many examples of unintentional harm – *adhā* – that the Prophet ﷺ endured due to ignorance or harsh nature of certain bedouin companions, Keller generalises it for all times and for all peoples which is an egregious blunder.

> The "fallacy of imputed intentionality" in such cases means to assume without decisive proof that an offensive deed or utterance was deliberately intended to offend Allah or His messenger (Allah bless him and give him peace) and hence legally kufr. Imam Subki's restriction of unbelief to cases of deliberate

This is nonsense. If a person utters blasphemy, he shall be regarded as an apostate whether or not he 'intended' to offend or hurt the Prophet ﷺ. This above suggestion is another false step by which he nudges towards his main goal. This can be easily resolved by a fatwā from any competent muftī.

~

Istiftā'a

If a person deliberately utters words which are explicit and plainly insulting to the Prophet ﷺ, will the person become a kāfir or not? Will he become a kāfir only if his intention is to insult the Prophet ﷺ?

Imām Subkī cites the following principle from Qāđī Íyāđ's *Shifā*:

> Ĥabīb ibn Rabīý said: Because the claim of 'favourable interpretation' is not admissible in explicit words[275]

which he further attests by saying:

> All of this is cited from Qāđī Íyāđ ﷺ, and much of it is cited earlier [as fragments]; but I thought of mentioning all of it here, as it is appropriate in this place. All texts of Shāfiýīs, Ĥanafīs and Ĥanbalīs agree and are concordant[276] that [all] of this is insulting and [thus] apostasy which deserves to be punished by execution; they only differed whether the person's repentance is accepted.[277]

Keller's technique is to sneak in words slowly, one after another and build upon conjectures. When you begin to introduce unproven premises and keep building on them, naturally, it sounds very logical, like a journey *Through the Looking Glass*. He mentions the Ĥadīth where youngsters among the *anşār* said: "May Allāh forgive RasūlAllāh ﷺ; he gives to the Quraysh and leaves us, and our swords are dripping from their blood".

> The insult and offense offered thereby to the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) was plain, but without legal consequences because it was unintentional.

Where is the insult? The label of insult is Keller's own because, he can manipulate this to suit his agenda. The Ĥadīth where young men from the Anşar were disappointed and demurred because they did not get a share in the spoils can be termed utmost as discontentment; Imām Ibn Ĥajar says:

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[275] *Sayf*, p407.

[276] With the Mālikī imām, Qāđī Íyāđ's quotes from *Shifā*.

[277] Ibid., p410.

> The leader/commander can favour some people and give them more than some others from the spoils of war; and that even the rich may be given [more] for tactical reasons; and there is no blame on those who seek worldly share…[278]

Notice that seeking their worldly share was not an insult; but projecting it as insult allows Keller to generalise that it was excused because of the lack of intention to revile. The next example is also similar where Keller mentions verse 51 of Sūrah Aĥzāb, where the Prophet ﷺ was exempted from assigning turns to his blessed wives, and the ĥadīth of Sayyidah Āýishah رضي الله عنها whom he quotes thus:

> I said, "I don't see but that your Lord rushes to fulfill your own whims"

It would have been better if Keller translated the word *hawā* in a more prudent manner; but then, Keller is trying to prove a point and this kind of translation helps his agenda. Anyway, this statement was neither an insult, nor a reproach – Sayyidah Āýishah said it out of playfulness and the affection of the Prophet ﷺ allowed her that liberty. Only Keller or his followers can use this example to establish a principle that: "anything disrespectful can be said, as long as one does not intend to insult the Prophet." This approach is worse than heretics who cite problematic ĥadīth to prove their *áqīdah*; here Keller takes a plain ĥadīth and tries to spin a new meaning to bolster his argument. Ibn Ĥajar says:

> {**I do not see, except that your Lord hastens to fulfil your wish**}…that is, what pleases you.[279] Qurţubī said: It was affection[280] and envy that prompted her to say this; which is similar to what she said elsewhere: 'I will not praise either of you; and I will not praise anyone except Allāh.' Otherwise, the attribution of *hawā* to the Prophet ﷺ should not be taken literally, because he ﷺ does not speak or act upon whims. If she had said, '**fulfil what you please**' it would have been more appropriate; yet, such an utterance is excusable for her, and because of her ardency.[281]

Áynī under the same ĥadīth says:

> {**hastens to fulfil your wish**} in things that you love. That is: I do not see, except that Allāh táālā gives you without delay that which you desire, by revelation upon that which you like and that which pleases thee.

He then quotes Qurţubī [just as in *Fat'ĥ al-Bārī*] and adds:

> Obviously, my opinion [cited above] is far better than this.[282]

Ĥadīth imāms clarify that this should not to be taken literally or that it should be used by anyone at all and warn that it is impermissible to attribute him with 'whim' or 'caprice'. Of course, Keller is not advocating that

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[278] See *Fat'ĥ al-Bārī*, 9/464; commentary of the ĥadīth #4330 in *Bukhārī*. Keller cites #3147, but the commentary is deferred to this ĥadīth.

[279] *riđāka.*

[280] *dalāl*: is literally coquettish behaviour, but translated here as affection and playfulness in the context.

[281] *Fat'ĥ al-Bārī*, 11/413, ĥadīth #5113. A comment on a variant report is omitted as indicated by the ellipsis. *Ghayrah,* is not negative or spiteful as 'jealousy' may sound in English; it has more nuance to it such as self-respect, endearing, zeal for something or being ardent.

[282] *Úmdat al-Qārī*, 14/64, ĥadīth #5113.

it is permissible to use that word; he acknowledges that it is offensive, but only concludes that as she ﷺ did not utter it to offend, it does not entail legal consequences.

> This last, admittedly jealous, remark was a reproach against her husband, the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and give him peace), but here too, because it was a mere emotional protest that lacked the explicit intention to demean or offend him, it entailed no legal consequences.

It was excusable for Sayyidah Āýishah ﷺ, and is certainly not excusable for anybody else. Sayyiduna Úmar ﷺ warned his daughter Sayyidah Ĥafşah ﷺ, not to compete with Sayyidah Āýishah ﷺ as she was more beloved to RasūlAllāh ﷺ and said: "Do you feel safe from the Wrath of Allāh for making RasūlAllāh angry? Verily you will perish.'[283] Scholars have clarified that either the Prophet ﷺ did not deem such words/deeds offensive, or he permitted them for a reason, or even if he was offended, he forgave those who said/did such things as it was only his right to forgive. Only an ignoramus will generalise such examples to establish a principle that anyone can say or do anything offensive to the Prophet ﷺ, without entailing legal consequences as long as there is no explicit intention to demean or offend him.

> There are many similar examples of unintended offense in the sunna.

Remember that offence and insult are two different things. Offence, or unintentional hurt caused by the companions occurred because they were not aware of these stipulations and prohibitions. After the Prophet ﷺ departed from this world, anyone uttering or doing something that is offensive to him or would hurt him shall face legal consequences. In any case, what stops Keller from citing incidents of explicit insults which the Master ﷺ forgave, for instance, like that of Ábdullāh ibn Ubayy, the leader of hypocrites and declare that blasphemy laws are alien to Islam?

Keller then cites the incident of Dhu'l Khuwayşarah and his offending statement to prove his generalisation. In his legal work on blasphemy of more than five-hundred pages, mentioning the case of Dhu'l Khuwayşarah who said "This distribution is not for the sake of Allāh," Imām Subkī comments:

> It is necessary for those in authority[284] who came after the time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, to avenge the right of Allāh from those who do not revert to Islām[285] – and it is not permissible for them to forsake it because they do not know [entirely] the reasons [for rulings] which the Prophet ﷺ knew; and Allāh táālā had informed him ﷺ and bestowed special knowledge and wisdom as much as Allāh willed [which was not granted to others]. Therefore, RasūlAllāh ﷺ did not ask Dhu'l Khuwayşarah or others like him to repent; however, if any thing like what Dhu'l Khuwayşarah said transpires in our time, it is necessary for us to demand [the blasphemer] to repent.
>
> It is possible that he forsook mandating repentance at that time for two reasons:

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[283] *Musnad al-Bazzār*: Musnad Úmar ibn al-Khaţţāb #206. 1/319.

[284] *ayimmah*: lit. Leaders, but in this context, rulers or their authorised representatives who can enforce law.

[285] That is after blasphemy and apostasy – because the only recourse is repentance and reverting to Islām, which is accepted by Shāfiýīs and which is the main purpose of Imām Subkī's book, *Sayf al-Maslūl*.

> Either, the Prophet ﷺ was informed of the true intentions [in the hearts] of such people, and knew that they would not repent – like the hypocrites, and the Prophet ﷺ was well aware of their hypocrisy – and there was no benefit in asking them to repent.
>
> Or because such people were ignorant and newcomers to Islām and were not aware of Sharaýī rulings, or they were not aware that prophets are given Divine Immunity or it is obligatory to respect and revere prophets and [because of] their exalted rank [they are] far removed from such things;[286] therefore, the Messenger ﷺ did not punish them as Allāh táālā has commanded him: ***Turn away from ignorant folk***.[287] Thus, such things were not apostasy for them – but only Allāh táālā knows what His Messenger ﷺ intended to do.[288]

It is clear from Imām Subkī's comment that we cannot use such examples to exempt blasphemers in our time. If a person utters an insult or says something disparaging the Prophet ﷺ, that person becomes a kāfir – regardless of his intention – if the words are plain and explicit. Only if the words are open for interpretation, the muftī shall examine whether any valid interpretation exists and is plausible in the context and rule accordingly. Ibn Ĥajar al-Haytami mentions this issue:

> [Scholars have said:] It is proven that he ﷺ ordered the execution of those who hurt him or disparaged him; it is his right and it is his choice [to punish or spare those who hurt him]. He chose to execute some people and forgave some others. After his passing away, there is no way others can differentiate on what merits forgiveness, and therefore the ruling is generic that [a person who hurts him] is executed because we do not know if he should be forgiven. It is not allowed for his followers [ummah] after him to forego his right, because the only permission [we are given and] reported from him, is to punish the blasphemer.[289]

Haytami cites the above from other scholars, though he does not accept this argument for refusal of accepting the *tawbah* of a blasphemer; yet, he does not deny that a Muslim will certainly become an apostate on account of insulting the Prophet ﷺ. Haytami mentions the same examples which Keller does, and says:

> ..and such examples are plenty and well-known. Even if he executed a Muslim on account of insulting him, this cannot be [a valid] proof;[290] because we[291] too rule that he should be executed because of his apostasy.[292]

No scholar admitted the requirement of 'intention' for plain and explicit insults. This is also evident from other examples of purported blasphemy, which are not explicit:

> According to the principles of our madh'hab, we cannot make takfīr because of this unless the person said so with an intention to belittle [the Prophet ﷺ] **because it is not explicit**...[293]

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[286] Such as being unfair or unjust.

[287] Sūrah Aárāf, 7:199.

[288] *Sayf*, p199.

[289] *Iýlām*, p112.

[290] Haytami is arguing about accepting the repentance of a blasphemer; here he means, even if RasūlAllāh ﷺ ordered the execution of a Muslim for insulting him, that is not sufficient proof for not accepting his repentance – the latter being the Mālikī and Ĥanbalī position. See Chapter 3 for more details.

[291] Shāfiýīs.

[292] Ibid.

[293] Ibid. p81.

Apparently, Keller only preaches 'nuances' and 'contexts' and 'fallacies' to others – he does not have to be mindful of such things himself, and routinely throws nuances under the bulldozer. His next example is about a man who utters a blasphemous statement unwittingly and without the intention to do so.

> Truly, Allah rejoices more at the repentance of a servant when he repents to Him than one of you would if riding his camel through a wasteland, and it wandered off, carrying away his food and water, and he despaired of ever getting it back; so he came to a tree and lay down in its shade, without hope of ever seeing his camel again; then, while lying there, suddenly finds it beside him and seizes its reins, so overjoyed that he cries, "O Allah, You are my slave, and I am Your lord"—making a mistake out of sheer happiness

The Ĥadīth of Muslim, and the *qaṣd* mentioned here is of a different kind; *qaṣd* is used to mean these two things:

- intention to *say* something – as opposed to slip of the tongue or a spontaneous exclamation
- intention to *mean* something

The example in the cited Ĥadīth of Muslim is neither of the above. Neither did the man deliberately say: "You are my slave" nor does he intends that meaning. In his ecstasy, he blurted "You are my slave". Obviously, if he meant what he said, there is no dispute that it was kufr; but according to Keller, it does not entail consequences even if he *said* it deliberately, as long as the intention to revile is not present. This difference of voluntarily saying something and inadvertently blurting out is mentioned in *Muĥīṭ*:

> One who utters words of kufr in full knowledge that they are words of kufr, and also believes in those words, he has committed kufr; even if he does not believe in [the meaning] of those words or does not know that they are words of kufr – but has uttered them voluntarily; most scholars have ruled such a person kāfir and did not admit the excuse of being ignorant.
>
> However, if his intention was not to utter those words of kufr, and he wanted to ***say*** something, but he said something else unintentionally, which was kufr – such as he wished to say: "There is no God but Allāh" and he involuntarily uttered "There is God with Allāh" or if wished to say: "Allāh hath no equal" but said its opposite [involuntarily], he shall not be ruled a kāfir.[294]

This is what Shaykh Álāuddīn also said, which was misunderstood by Keller:

> Or if he disparages any ruling of Sacred Law; or utters a statement of unbelief voluntarily – even jokingly, even if he does not believe in it – because of slighting religion.

> It is difficult to think of an utterance more blasphemous or offensive to Allah than the latter, had it been intentional. But since it was not, the principle of Imam Subki necessarily applies that the person who says such an expression without intending to revile Allah or His messenger (Allah bless him and give him peace) cannot be judged an unbeliever.

This conclusion is absolute nonsense and Keller's own invention. Nowhere did Imām Subkī say that blasphemy is pardonable as long as one does not intend to revile Allāh or His Messenger ﷺ. In other words,

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[294] *Muĥīṭ al-Burhānī*, 5/226. Burhānuddīn Ábd al-Ázīz ibn Māzah al-Bukhārī (d.616 AH). Also in *Majmaá al-Anhur*, 2/502.

Keller says that it is permissible to say: "You are my servant" to Allāh táālā as long as you don't intend to revile Him. No wonder another ignorant preacher said in a Youtube video that "we are all children of Allāh"[295] But according to Kellerian theory – one should not have the intention of blasphemy – but can say whatever he/she likes; Keller has clearly mentioned this a number of times:

> Something might be said that while outwardly offensive to Allah or His messenger (Allah bless him and give him peace), was nevertheless intended by the speaker to make a valid point, not as an insult.

Anyway, coming back to this Ĥadīth, Qāđī Íyāđ says:

> If a person says such a thing – in shock or bewilderment or distraction[296] – it does not deserve censure, in-sha'Allāh. Similarly, narration of such things for a valid sharaýī purpose, such as to instruct others etc. [is not blameworthy]. But it is not [permissible] to just narrate to agitate or for mimicry or to mention the parable retold by the Prophet ﷺ for amusement; even if one does not believe in what he repeats.[297]

Álī al-Qārī commenting on this Ĥadīth:

> He says so by slip of the tongue and stumbles from saying the proper statement: "I am your servant and You are my Lord" {**due to immense joy**} this is repeated to emphasise [and indicate] the excuse and the reasons which made him utter such a thing; because intense happiness or sorrow may sometimes cause the person's death, or shock him, preventing him from understanding plain and simple things.[298]

It is necessary to point out one more thing here. Keller says:

> The Qur'an itself, for example, is filled with verses quoting kafirs denying Allah and His messengers (upon whom be peace), yet reciting such verses is certainly not kufr, unless it is accompanied with the intention of unbelief.

So what is he trying to prove? Isn't there a difference between reciting a verse that *quotes*: "Christians say: Jesus is the son of Allāh.."[299] and uttering it as a statement? Where did anyone say that ***quoting*** a statement of kufr by way of citation is kufr? We know that Keller's logical prowess is not very stellar but we will try to simplify things for him:

The Christians say: {Jesus is the son of Allāh}

Saying only the words in the parantheses above – even jokingly is kufr, even if the person does not have the intention of unbelief. For example, no one can refer to Sayyiduna Ýīsā ﷺ as: "Son of God" even if he does not have that intention of unbelief and only wants to ingratiate himself with Christians or tries to emulate them. But, we never disputed that citation of a blasphemy for a valid reason is permissible and is not deemed as committing blasphemy oneself, as mentioned by Qāđī Íyāđ.[300]

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[295] *al-íyādhu billāh.*

[296] *dahshah, dhuhūl.*

[297] *Ikmāl al-Múlim*, Qāđī Íyāđ, #2747, 8/245.

[298] *Mirqāt al-Mafātīĥ*, #2333, 5/242.

[299] *al-íyādhu billāh.* Verily Allāh has no father, no son.

[300] See Appendix G for a full translation of the *Seven Cases Involving Blasphemy*; the principle of citation is the sixth case.

If we disputed this principle – Keller probably thinks that we do not know this and therefore tries to teach – there was no need for his lengthy dissertation. He could have simply named a few books of Alahazrat where he *quotes* Deobandi blasphemies and gotten over it with a smug comment: "See even Ahmad Reza also has said things Deobandis have said." Suppose Keller were a judge in an Islamic court and a blasphemer was brought for prosecution and the blasphemer says: "Indeed, I said such things but I did not have the intention to revile in my heart." How does Keller propose to verify that? Split open his chest, perhaps?

> Knowledge of the above principle could have probably prevented much of the "fatwa wars" that took place around the turn of the last century in India between Hanafi Muslims of the Barelwi and Deobandi

Which principle? That people are free to say anything and are excused as long as they do not say it with the intention to revile Allāh táālā or His Messenger ﷺ? Of course, Sunni scholars did not know this Kellerian principle; rather they followed earlier scholars:

> [Qāđī Íyāđ's] opinion is obvious and confirms to the principles of our madh'hab. Because someone is ruled kāfir based on what is observed from the outside; one cannot look[301] at his motives or intentions, nor consider the context in which he has said so.[302]

Which bewilderment or ecstatic joy made the Deobandis say what they said? Perhaps, it is the same intense joy which led them to print blasphemous statements – and shocking amazement that led them to defend those statements, and continue to be defended by their followers and apologists for many years afterward.

~

Before proceeding further, we must reiterate that Keller's principle of "anything is permissible to utter as long as the intention of insult is absent" is the false premise upon which the rest of his argument rests. Unfortunately, Keller attributes this to Imām Subkī and it has been proven from the imām's own work that this 'principle' is invalid. Keller then goes for the kill:

> They culminated in a number of fatwas published by Ahmad Reza Khan Barelwi (d. 1340/1921) of the takfir of major Deobandi ulema of his times…
>
> …and indeed, of anyone who did not consider them kafirs—fatwas which have cast their long shadows down to our own times. In comparison, no Deobandi scholar of note, to the author's knowledge, has yet made takfir of Barelwis.

Ignoring Keller's airbrushed history lesson for the moment, let us examine the fallacies in his statement, which can be restated as follows:

a. Alahazrat did not know the principle: "anything blasphemous can be said unless intention of reviling is present"

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[301] Obviously, it is not possible to know what is in their hearts.

[302] Haytami in *Iýlām* cited earlier.

b. And because Alahazrat did not know this principle, he issued a number of fatāwā making takfīr of major Deobandi scholars

c. Alahazrat also said that anyone who does not consider them kāfirs is a kāfir himself

d. In comparison, no Deobandi scholar of note, has made takfīr of Barelwis.

In the last line, "to the author's knowledge," gives the false impression that Keller must have spent decades researching Deobandi literature and has exhaustively read their works. If it is indeed the case, then let Keller list how many Deobandi fatāwā/books he has seen or heard prior to writing this article.

By this absurd comparison, Keller insinuates that Alahazrat is unjust and Deobandis are good – the former made takfīr but the latter ones did not. If not, what exactly does he mean? This is similar to a qāđī who issues a death sentence to a murderer and whose lawyer argues that the condemned man has not accused the qāđī of murder [insinuating that the judge is wrong]. In reality, Deobandis committed blasphemy of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ; Alahazrat made takfīr following the ijmāá:

> Muĥammad ibn Saĥnūn said that scholars are in unanimous agreement that the blasphemer of the Prophet ﷺ and his denigrator is an apostate. Allāh's promise of punishment for such a person is ordained. The punishment for such a person in our nation is execution. Whosoever doubts in his apostasy and in his punishment has himself become an apostate.[303]

Of course, Keller does not know the 'nuance' mentioned in Alahazrat's fatāwā that 'whoever doubts' applies to those who are aware of the blasphemies and yet consider such blasphemers as Muslim:

> One who comes to know of their blasphemies and still does not consider them kāfir is also a kāfir…
>
> ….Yes, if indeed there is a newcomer or someone who does not know anything [*nirā jāhil*] or someone who is unaware, such that the sound of these blasphemies has not reached his ears – and does not deem them kāfir simply because he does not know, are all excused so far that it is explained to them and they accept forthwith.[304]

A simple answer to the following question rests our case: "Zayd commits blasphemy, and Bakr comes to know that Zayd has committed blasphemy. Yet Bakr does not consider Zayd as a kāfir in spite of his blasphemy; does Bakr remain a Muslim?"

> Now, any issue that has been debated back and forth between two parties of Islamic scholars, both of whom know the Qur'an and hadith, Hanafi jurisprudence, and the 'aqida of Islam, is by that very fact not a central religious principle that is "necessarily known to be of the religion of Islam,"

Absolute nonsense again; Keller should probably take a preliminary course in logic. According to Keller, if there is a debate on an issue, by that very fact that there is a debate – that issue ceases to become an Essential precept. In other words, the issue is itself inconsequential – whether or not there is a debate on that issue makes it 'necessarily known to be of Islām'.

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[303] *Shifā*, p356.

[304] *Fatāwā ar-Riđawiyyah*, 21/283-284.

As such, it cannot be the criterion for anyone's *kufr* or *iman*.

Thus, if a group of people who claim to know the Qur'ān and Ĥadīth also deny the Judgement day, by the very fact that there is a debate/disagreement, it ceases to become an Essential precept; and therefore not a criterion for anyone's kufr or iman.

First, let us break down the statement:

1. Any issue debated back and forth between two parties of Islamic scholars
2. Both of whom know the Qur'ān and Ĥadīth, Ĥanafī jurisprudence and the áqīdah of Islām
3. Is by that very fact (of being debated back and forth) not a central religious principle
4. But rather can only be something peripheral that is disagreed by úlamā
5. As such, it cannot be criterion for anyone's kufr or iman.

And analyse it :

1. Let us take the issue of calumny[305] of Sayyidah Āýishah and two parties of Islamic scholars: ostensibly, the Rāfiđī also claims to be a 'scholar' of Qur'ān and Ĥadīth. On what basis will Keller preclude them from his claim of being a scholar? And because he is 'debating' the issue, he therefore remains well within Keller's framework of disagreement.
2. Yes, Ĥanafī fiqh is something a Rāfiđī may not profess; but is Ĥanafī fiqh a basis for *đarūriyāt*?
3. So that issue is, *by the very fact* – of being debated back and forth – not a central religious principle.
4. But rather peripheral.
5. As such, it cannot be criterion for anyone's kufr or iman.

The fallacy and circular argument in Keller's framework is obvious. Instead of fixing the *đarūriyāt* as established by ijmāá, and anyone who dissents shall have left the fold – Keller generalises[306] that a 'debate between úlamā' renders the issue as peripheral. The correct principle can be stated as:

1. There are core issues (*đarūriyāt*) and peripheral issues.
2. Anyone denying or disputing core issues is a kāfir[307] regardless of how much learned he is or professes to be a scholar of Qur'ān and Sunnah (notwithstanding his proficiency in Ĥanafī fiqh).

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[305] In this context, we are specifically talking of *qadhaf*.

[306] Indeed, things debated by our elders *ARE* a factor in deciding whether an issue is a core-belief or a peripheral issue. But after ijmāá is established and centuries later, a debate on such issues in our time is inconsequential. Debate of 'scholars' in OUR time is measured against the established core/peripheral criteria – and indeed, the person's status as a reliable scholar or an innovator hinges on his compatibility or lack thereof, with these criteria.

[307] See *Chapter 3: On Apostasy* for quotes from *Mútaqad* and *Mustanad* on this matter.

3. Peripheral issues are debated back and forth by úlamā and therefore, these cannot be a criterion for īmān or kufr of anyone.

In our example earlier, 'calumny of Sayyidah Āýishah' is kufr; which is an established principle. If any scoundrel in our time indulges in calumny, and seeks to make it a peripheral issue, we will still not hesitate to rule him kāfir just because a 'debate' has now ensued. Similarly, blasphemy of the Prophet ﷺ is apostasy. Deobandis were ruled kāfir by Alahazrat on account of blasphemy and disputing *đarūrī* precepts, not because of peripheral issues. Keller wants us to believe that because there was a debate, these were peripheral issues, and therefore takfīr made by Alahazrat is invalid.

> Among the evidence for this, as previously noted, is that Allah has commanded us to "ask those who know well, if you know not"

Does Keller include Imām Suĥnūn among "people who know" and a multitude who followed him, and all those who said: "Anyone who doubts in the kufr of a blasphemer is a kāfir himself?"

> Despite the acrimonious charges and countercharges, an unbiased look at the polemical literature of the Barelwis and Deobandis bears out its essentially peripheral nature in three ways:

How do we know that it is an unbiased look? How many Sunni scholars – Barelwis, as he says – did Keller contact on this issue? How many 'polemical' works of Sunnis did Keller read? If he cannot read Urdu, who helped him with the information and translating Urdu texts and passages? What is the criterion of 'bias'? It will soon be obvious that Keller has not even bothered to investigate the history of the issue, let alone read the polemical literature, which he dismisses with such confidence. Notice that Keller, the unbiased, presents charges and counter-charges as 'acrimonious' – as if they are some sort of abuse, once again trampling the 'nuance' that the charge upon Deobandis was blasphemy of the Prophet ﷺ; and Deobandis retorted with attacks and insults on the person of Imām Aĥmad Riđā. I have presented quotes of Deobandis from their own books – just as Alahazrat did – and perhaps, according to Kellerian Standard of Unbiased, Appendix C is an acrimonious charge.

> First, the fiqh differences between them, mostly about the acceptability or unacceptability of certain practices of folk Islam in the Indian subcontinent, do not concern matters of belief to begin with

Keller probably presumes that scholars in the subcontinent are similar to his murids from the subcontinent, or the few average ones he must have encountered; and thus generalises that they do not know anything at all. Before setting the straw-man on fire, let Keller prove that any prominent Sunni/Barelwi scholar has made takfīr of Deobandis or Salafis for disagreeing with 'practices' such as celebration of Mawlid or seeking intercession of saints. On the other hand, we can present scores of examples from authentic works of these deviant groups, which consider 'practices' and 'fiqh differences' as polytheism and deem people indulging in such practices as polytheists. But Keller, the champion of 'unbiased' has not seen any takfīr made by Deobandis.[308]

[308] We shall see some examples in the following pages.

Why, he does not even know Ismāýīl Dihlawī or his *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān*, which Deobandis hold dear as faith itself.[309]

> Second, none of the six main *'aqida* issues fought over by Barelwis and Deobandis

This straw-man is so big that – in-sha'Allāh – we shall douse its fire in a separate chapter.

> Third, the only substantive pretext for *takfīr* between them is an issue that illustrates the "fallacy of imputed intentionality"

Keller deftly transforms the main point of contention to an irrelevant one, shoving it behind the thick smoke billowing from smoldering strawmen; as if Sunni scholars have nothing better to do except make takfīr of Deobandis.[310] But wait, Keller is specific about his comments:

> ...namely the charge of Ahmad Reza Khan Barelwi in his *Husam al-Haramayn*

This too, we shall discuss later; in-sha'Allah.

> "The Imputed Insult," to the remarks of these two scholars in context, and show how Imam Subki's distinction between intentional and unintentional offense offers a compelling Islamic legal solution to a debate that has become a social problem.

First, Keller insinuates that the statements of both Khalīl and Thānawī are presented out of context and that he will give the proper context himself – in other words Deobandi apologia – which we will examine in its appropriate place. Keller again and again falsely attributes to Imām Subkī, a 'principle' which no scholar will accept. Imām Subkī himself has said it clearly elsewhere:

> I have mentioned in my book *Sayf al-Maslul,* the principle that whosoever intends to hurt the Prophet ﷺ deserves to be executed such as Ábdullāh ibn Ubayy and those who did not intend to hurt the Prophet ﷺ, such as Mistaĥ and Ĥamnah, do not deserve to be executed.
>
> However, concerning insulting the Prophet ﷺ, ijmāá is established that it is kufr; and mocking him ﷺ is kufr; Allāh táālā says: "***Tell them: 'Do you make fun of Allāh táālā, His verses and His Prophet?' Do not make excuses – you have become infidels after having professed faith***."[311]
>
> Rather, even if you do not mock him; Abū Úbayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām ruled a person kāfir for memorising half a [poetic] verse which disparaged the Prophet ﷺ.[312]

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[309] Rashid Gangohi has said in his fatwā: *The book Taqwiyatu'l Īmān is an excellent book and matchless in its refutation of shirk and bidáh; its proofs are entirely from the Book of Allāh and Ĥadīth. Keeping it with oneself and acting upon it, is faith in essence.*

[310] Keller's explanation of why he has used the word 'pretext' in endnote #6 is dealt with in Obiter Dicta.

[311] Sūrah Tawbah, 9:65-66.

[312] *Fatāwā Imām Subkī* 2/573.

A little earlier in the same fatwa, he makes the distinction between *sabb* and *adhā*

> Concerning insult [*sabb*] alone, I have already mentioned [the ruling] earlier and shall discuss more shortly; and hurting [*īydhā*] the Prophet ﷺ is a serious issue, except that it is governed by a principle.[313]

But according to Keller, "One can say anything, even explicit insults,[314] but is culpable only if they have the intention to insult." We cannot say whether this is due to genuine confusion – that he did not understand it – or deliberately distorts Imām Subkī's statement. Imām Subkī was talking about *adhā*, not *sabb* and we have made the distinction earlier; Keller is exploiting the handicap in translation of Arabic terms and forces his way forward deceptively. Let Keller show us where any Sunni scholar has made the distinction between intentional and unintentional *sabb* or *shatm*. I quote Qāđī Íyāđ once again, which has been cited approvingly by both Imām Subkī and Imām Ibn Ĥajar al-Haytami:

> Even if the person proves that he has not deliberately said any of this to deride him ﷺ; or intended to insult or disparage him ﷺ – whether it was ignorance that made him say such things or because he was discontented or disgruntled, or he was inebriated, or he blurted it out without thinking or it slipped from his tongue, or because of haughtiness or impudence, or impetuousity and recklessness; in all such cases, the ruling is the same as in the first case – that is, execution without further deliberation or any hesitation, because the excuse of ignorance [in such cases] which cause apostasy is inadmissible, nor the excuse of slip of the tongue, nor any other excuse which I have mentioned above as long as the person is sane and has not lost his reason.
>
> Except a person in duress, who utters such things due to coercion – as long as faith is undisturbed in his heart. It is therefore, that the Andalusian scholars decreed against Ibn Ĥātim when he challenged the *zuhd* of RasūlAllāh ﷺ, as mentioned earlier.[315]

Keller can either disprove this or accuse Qāđī Íyāđ and all those who followed him, including Imām Subkī and Haytami of not having understood the Kellerian Principle of "Imputed Insult" and failed to make the distinction between intentional and unintentional *sabb*. After that, he can proceed to illuminate the subcontinent:

> to clarify the mistake of thinking that such differences do so in an essay I intend to write in the future, Allah willing, on "the fallacy of considering ijtihad as 'aqida".

But does he intend to educate common folk on the respect and reverence due to the Prophet ﷺ or will he be outraged at anyone denigrating the Prophet ﷺ? Why, it is easy; anything can be said as long as there is no intention to revile.

[313] Ibid.

[314] Recall the examples used to illustrate the 'Kellerian Principle' like that of Dhu'l Khuwayşarah and the example of a blasphemous, but a spontaneous and involuntary uttering of the lost traveller; Keller presents his conclusion:

> Something might be said that while outwardly offensive to Allah or His messenger (Allah bless him and give him peace), was nevertheless intended by the speaker to make a valid point, not as an insult.

[315] *Iýlām*, p.82; *Shifā*, p364.

V. KELLER'S LIST: THE SIX DISPUTED ISSUES

"What giants?" said Sancho Panza.

"Those thou seest there," answered his master, "with the long arms, and some have them nearly two leagues long."

"Look, your worship," said Sancho; "what we see there are not giants but windmills, and what seem to be their arms are the sails that turned by the wind make the millstone go."

"It is easy to see," replied Don Quixote, "that thou art not used to this business of adventures; those are giants; and if thou art afraid, away with thee out of this and betake thyself to prayer while I engage them in fierce and unequal combat."

So saying, he gave the spur to his steed Rocinante, heedless of the cries his squire Sancho sent after him, warning him that most certainly they were windmills and not giants he was going to attack. He, however, was so positive they were giants that he neither heard the cries of Sancho, nor perceived, near as he was, what they were, but made at them shouting, "Fly not, cowards and vile beings, for a single knight attacks you."[316]

It was a full moon night, and a man was intently searching for something in a clearing. A passerby stopped and asked if the man needed any help. "I have lost a diamond ring" said the man. The newcomer joined the search and after a while asked him, "Where exactly did you drop it?" The man replied, "Oh, the ring? I dropped it in the thicket, but it is dark over there; but I am searching for it here because it is bright here".

The Deobandi-Sunni dispute is more than a hundred and fifty years old; some issues are about rituals and practices and some others are about secondary áqīdah issues. Deobandis and other Wahābīs have a huge list of things they deem bidáh or shirk; but Sunnis make takfīr only on issues related to Essentials and cases of blasphemy. There are dozens of contentious issues between Sunnis and Deobandis/Wahābīs, but it is not clear how Keller came up with this shortlist of six issues, which he declares: "*six main áqīdah issues fought over by Barelwis and Deobandis*."

What is the basis and the source of this list?

Islām arrived in the subcontinent about a thousand years ago and until 1800s, Sunnis were united in India. Many saints and scholars have graced this region, and arguably, the most famous ones in latter times are Shaykh Aĥmad Sirhindi, Shāh Ábd al-Ĥaqq Dihlawī, Shāh Walīyullāh Dihlawi and Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz Dihlawī.

The family of Shāh Walīyullāh was among the most prominent scholarly families in early 1800s. His illustrious son Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz Dihlawī was a famous ĥadīth imām and a Ĥanafī jurist; he is respected by both Sunnis and Deobandis and they consider him a reliable and an authoritative scholar. Yet, it was his nephew,[317] Shāh Ismāýīl, who dissented from the ways of common Muslims – and indeed from the tradition of his forefathers – and introduced Wahābī beliefs and ideas in the subcontinent. Influenced by writings of Muĥammad ibn Ábd al-Wahhāb Najdī, he wrote *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān*, a harsh and abusive book, which caused a furore from the

[316] *Don Quixote*, Chapter 8. Translated to English in 1885 by John Ormsby (1829-1895).

[317] Shāh Walīyullāh had four sons: Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz, Shāh Ábd al-Qādir, Shāh Rafīýuddīn and Shāh Ábd al-Ghanī; the first two did not have male offspring; Shāh Rafīýuddīn had six sons: Muhammad Ýīsā, Muşţafā, Makhşūşullāh, Muĥammad Ĥusayn, Muĥammad Mūsā, Muĥammad Ĥasan, and all six of them were scholars. Shāh Ábd al-Ghani had one son Muĥammad Ismāýīl.

beginning and was the first major essay of Wahābī thought in India.[318] This book was refuted by many scholars and among the foremost who refuted this *fitnah* were Faḍl al-Ĥaqq Khayrābādī, Faḍl al-Rasūl Badāyūnī, Muftī Aĥmad Saýīd Naqshbandī[319] and Ismāýīl's own cousins, Shāh Makhşūşullāh Dihlawī and Shāh Mūsā Dihlawī – all of them students of Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz. Shāh Makhşūşullāh called the book *Tafwiyatu'l Īmān,* or the *Annihilation of Faith*. Ismāýīl followed his *Tafwiyat*, with more abominable works such as *Yak Rozi*, and *Yīđāĥ al-*Ĥaqq. Among the major ideas espoused by Ismāýīl:

- Rejection of taqlīd of imāms
- Exhortation of common people to derive rulings on their own from the Qur'ān and Ĥadīth
- That seeking intercession of Prophets and saints is polytheism
- Seeking help through intercessors (*istighātha, istiáānah, istimdād*) is polytheism
- Falsehood is included in Divine Power – and it is possible for Allāh táālā to lie
- That Allāh táālā can create billions of Muĥammad ﷺ in an instant even now
- It is heresy and ignorance to believe that the Creator does not have a direction
- Everyone in the creation (including prophets) is lower than a menial cobbler in the Presence of the Almighty
- If one's thinks about the Prophet ﷺ in prayer, it is worse than thinking about one's own bullock or donkey
- One should respect Prophets only as much as one would respect an elder brother
- Prophets are leaders similar to village headmen being head of the village

Post-modern apologists of Ismāýīl claim that he did not reject taqlīd or that his books were tampered – yet without an iota of shame, those very books are promoted by Deobandis. Some people may invoke Keller's fancy rule of printed books to subvert this issue – yet, Deobandi elders did not disagree with the contents of the book or disputed the attribution to Ismāýīl. Deobandis revere, respect and follow Ismāýīl Dihlawī and his ideas and defend his blasphemies – that is the biggest bone of contention. After Ismāýīl was killed, the tribulation had subsided for some time, until Rashid Gangohī revived it through his school at Deoband; his fatāwā are full of praise for Ismāýīl's book and dismisses the rumour that Ismāýīl had repented from some of those beliefs – the rumour, which caused Alahazrat to withhold from takfīr.

In his *Kawkabah al-Shihābiyyah*, Alahazrat mentioned 70 statements of this Ismāýīl and demonstrated the kufr of those statements; yet, he abstained from making takfīr of Ismāýīl because a rumour was afloat that Ismāýīl had repented from his heresy. Regardless, those statement ***are*** blasphemies and anybody who professes those beliefs shall become a kāfir.

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[318] See *Ismāýīl Dihlawī aur un ki Taqwiyatu'l Īmān* by Shaykh Abu'l Ĥasan Zayd Fārūqī Naqshbandī Dihlawī al-Az'harī.

[319] He was a prominent scholar and descendant of Imām Rabbānī Mujaddid Alf al-Thānī.

Deobandis furthered Ismāýīl's cause and in the course of defending his heresies, added blasphemies of their own. Scholars of Ahlu's Sunnah refuted them – and in those cases where it was unavoidable, they made takfīr of those people. Deobandis shot back defending their elders and slandering Sunni scholars; but they also did something which Sunnis did not do enough – they reached out to Sunni scholars outside the region and presented themselves as authentic Sunnis who dislike Wahābīs and follow Sufi traditions; and they presented their elders in an acceptable form – not discussing their heresies or their beliefs; and of course, *Muhannad* was always at hand to deceive the rest of the world. [320]

This is the background of the conflict. Deobandis active on the Internet may dispute this summary and vehemently disagree that they are not Wahābīs – but their Wahābism is evident from their books and fatāwā and continued support and promotion of Ismāýīl Dihlawī, his *Tafwiyatu'l Īmān* and other works. Ismāýīl's tract is certainly based on Shaykh Najdi's works; Shaykh Abu'l Ĥasan Zayd Fārūqī Dihlawī has conclusively proven in his work[321] and demonstrated that whole passages are translated verbatim and even chapter names are lifted from the Najdi's book.

Issues upon which Deobandis conflict with Sunnis can be grouped broadly thus:

1. ***Essentials of Religion:*** Qāsim Nānotwī said that ***khatamu'n nabiyyīn*** does not necessarily mean that our Master ﷺ is chronologically the final prophet, and if a prophet were to arrive after him, it would not affect the finality of his prophethood; Rashid Gangohī in a fatwā said that we should not make takfīr of a person who claims that Allāh táālā has lied [*wuqūú e kazib ke máanī durust ho gaye*]. Such examples are aplenty in that burnable book *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān*.[322]

2. ***Blasphemy:*** Ashraf Álī Thānawī claims that the knowledge of unseen possessed by the Prophet ﷺ is similar to that possessed by animals and madmen. Khalīl Aĥmad said that the expanse of the knowledge of the world is proven for Satan by texts, and no such evidence for RasūlAllāh ﷺ exists and it is polytheism to prove the same knowledge for RasūlAllāh ﷺ. Maĥmūd al-Ĥasan in his dirge for Gangohī committed a number of blasphemies.

3. ***Secondary Áqīdah* Issues**: Deobandis do not accept the Prophet ﷺ was given extensive knowledge of unseen; that he ﷺ was a man just like us, citing the last verse of Sūrah Kahf; Deobandis do not permit *istighātha*, and deem it shirk. Calling upon RasūlAllāh ﷺ for help as a form of tawassul is deemed polytheism by Deobandis following other Wahābīs, even though such prayers are found in Ĥadīth. Ismāýīl claimed that RasūlAllāh ﷺ is dead and became dust. First, Ismāýīl and then Gangohī and his followers claim that it is possible for Allāh táālā to lie.[323] Ismāýīl Dihlawī's books also advocate anthropomorphic beliefs.

4. ***Culture of Disrespect:*** Mentioning the Prophet ﷺ and Awliyā'a without due respect – a trend set by Ismāýīl and his *Tafwiyat*. Deobandis routinely use ugly analogies to illustrate their point, thereby exposing

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[320] Even the faux rage against the founder of Wahābism, showed by Khalīl Aĥmed in *Muhannad* was retracted later; which will not spare those who attested that fable as authentic áqīdah of Deobandis – nor do they note this retraction in newer versions.

[321] *Maulavi Ismāýīl Dihlawī aur Unki Taqwiyatu'l Īmān*, Mawlānā Abu'l Ĥasan Zayd.

[322] See Appendix C for scans of those passages upon which Sunni scholars made takfīr.

[323] Alahazrat says that it is kufr according to jurists, but scholars of kalām withhold from takfīr.

the filth within themselves. One famous Deobandi debater, Ţāhir Gayāvī compared reciting salutation upon the Prophet ﷺ in the masjid loudly, to feces in a plastic bag; the same person asserting that Allāh táālā can lie, used the analogy of a young man who can commit adultery but abstains from it. In *Juhd al-Muqill*, Maĥmūd al-Ĥasan claims that it is in the Divine Power of Allāh táālā do all ugly or evil things [*qudrah álā al-qabāyiĥ*] – and it is mumkin dhātī for Allāh táālā.[324]

5. ***Scorning Practices as Bidáh/Shirk***: Deobandis scorn and ridicule celebration of Mawlids; or prayers known as *fātiĥah* – donating reward of good deeds to the deceased; including that of saints known as *úrs*. Thānawī claims that describing RasūlAllāh ﷺ as 'remover of affliction' is polytheism. Deobandis deem it an act of faith to possess *Tafwiyatu'l Īmān* and to read it.

6. ***Exaggerated Praise of Deobandi Elders***: Sometimes, such praise borders on blasphemy and escape that ruling only because they claim them to be dreams. Khalīl Aĥmad in his *Barāhīn* writes that in one such dream RasūlAllāh ﷺ was speaking in Urdu and when asked, he said that it was because of his association with the scholars of Deoband; in another dream, RasūlAllāh ﷺ was cooking food for Gangohī; Maĥmūd al-Ĥasan in his elegy to Gangohī belittles the prophets Ýīsā ؑ and Yūsuf ؑ comparing them with his own master; and that Gangohī was second to RasūlAllāh ﷺ; he goes on further and describes Gangohī as *sustainer of the creation – murabbi e khalāyiq*. This kind of exaggeration reaches grotesque proportions: when a follower writes to Thānawī that he was reciting *lā ilāha illā Allāh, Ashraf Álī RasūlAllāh* in a dream and then *Allahumma şallī álā Ashraf Álī* in wakefulness; instead of rebuking him, Thānawī reassures him that it is a comforting event.

7. ***Mistakes in Translations and Fatāwā***: Rashid Gangohī rules that it merits reward [*thawāb*] to eat the house crow; the verses of the Qur'ān are translated recklessly in Thānawi's and other translations disregarding the esteem of Allāh táālā or his prophets; Gangohī deems that the phrase ***raĥmatun li'l áālamīn,*** is not restricted to RasūlAllāh ﷺ, and others such as awliyā'a can also be described as ***raĥmatun li'l áālamīn***.

8. ***Hypocrisy and Self-Contradition of Deobandis***: This is the defining characterstic of Deobandis – they have a book, an áqīdah and a fatwā for all seasons. When they meet Sunni scholars outside the subcontinent, they claim that their áqīdah is described in *Muhannad*; but in their fatāwā and Urdu books, they scorn those very things as bidáh or shirk.

   The ugliest form of their hypocrisy is the exaggerated praise [*ghuluw*] of their own elders – a number of things which they scorn as polytheism or innovation when said about Prophets and Awliyā'a, is claimed as a praiseworthy attribute of their own elders. In an even bizzare twist, when Deobandi muftīs were asked about statements of their elders, without mentioning their names, they ruled them kāfir – yet, they obstinately defend them and accuse Sunnis of being unfair if they issue the same fatwā. Self-contradiction of Deobandis is a chronic problem – sometimes, a certain belief or action is shirk; and at other times it is not; this contradiction is not only between two different people, but in the fatawā of the same person.

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[324] *Juhd al-Muqill*, p59, The Seventh Proem; also in *Tadhkiratu'l Khalīl,* p146, that stealing, drinking wine, ignorance and oppression are included in Divine Power.

Slander of Sunni Scholars: Ĥusayn Aĥmad Tāndwī wrote *Shihāb al-Thāqib*, in defence of Deobandis, but is also a compendium of insults and imprecations against Alahazrat. Similarly, Murtazā Ĥasan Chāndpūrī and others wrote booklets and pamphlets attacking the person of Alahazrat, in their attempt to divert the focus from their own flaws. Abu'l Ĥasan Nadwī resorted to bald-faced lies in his biographical notice on Alahazrat and Sunni scholars who refuted the heresy of Ismāýīl Dihlawī smearing them as innovators – Taqī Uthmanī made a similar attempt in his answer to an Arab scholar inquiring about Aĥmad Riđā Khān, answering innocently, that 'Barelwis' make takfīr of Deobandis because they forbid polytheistic practices.

9. ***Blind Support and Defence of Deobandi Elders***: including their blasphemies. Even if a hundred explicit proofs are presented, they try to find some ambiguous or obscure passage in a book and generalise that it is the general áqīdah of all scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah. Manżūr Númānī's *Faysla Kun Munazara* is touted as the last word in the debate,[325] even though it is full of falsehoods and misrepresentations similar to Keller's *Iman, Kufr, and Takfir*. In an attempt to exonerate their elders, they rush recklessly where even illiterate Muslims fear to tread.

Sunni scholars make *takfīr* of Deobandis only in the first two cases and deem them heretics and misguided for the rest of their stultiloquence. The last case however, is pending examination: if a person knowingly defends explicit blasphemies, then he too shall be judged as an apostate, because:

> Among things that cause apostasy is one's being concordant with [and approving of] disbelief, even if it is implied; for example, if a kāfir wants to accept Islām, and asks a Muslim to instruct the testimony of faith, and if that Muslim does not do it, or says "Wait until I am done with my work or finish my sermon," [if he is a preacher]; here, it is as if he has suggested [the kāfir] to not become a Muslim...[326]

Mawlānā Aĥmad Saýīd Każmī writes:

> I have mentioned presently that the fundamental difference and reasons for the dispute between Deobandis and Ahl as-Sunnah are those passages in which there is blasphemy against Allāh táālā and His Messenger ﷺ. Deobandis say that these statements are not disrespectful or insulting – Sunnis say that the insult and denigration in them is explicit...[327]

Many statements of Deobandis fall in multiple categories above. It should be noted that we do not include weird anecdotes of Deobandi elders, like the lewd stories narrated by Thānawī or such things reported about Gangohī or Nānotwī, mentioned in their own works; these are personal shortcomings and only show that they were ornery people lionised by their followers.

A detailed review of these cases is beyond the scope of this book, but the objective of mentioning them here is to expose the preposterousness of Keller's claim that the main disputed issues are the ones mentioned in his list. Regardless, let us examine Keller's understanding of these issues in the context of the Deobandi-Sunni conflict; indeed, these are disputed issues, but they are not the main ones per se, but because of the number of underlying reasons as we shall see:

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[325] In-sha'Allāh, I have the intention of writing a refutation of that screed in the future, Allāh táālā is a Sufficient Helper.

[326] *Iýlām*, p31.

[327] *Al-Ĥaqq al-Mubīn,* p15, Sayyid Aĥmed Saýīd Kāżmī.

Keller's List of Six Disputed Issues		
	Issue	**Keller's Assessment**
1	Knowledge of Unseen of the Prophet **(Ílm al-Ghayb)**	Almost Fair
2	The Prophet is present and watching **(Ĥāđir – Nāżir)**	Fair Appraisal
3	The Prophet's will and control **(Mukhtār al-Kull)**	Fair Appraisal
4	Intercession of the Prophet in this world and the next **(Tawassul – Shafāáh)**	Half-Truths and Skewed
5	Possibility of falsehood in Allāh's Speech **(Imkān al-Kadhib)**	Clueless and Ignorant
6	Whether Allāh can create another like the Prophet **(Imkān al-Nażīr)**	Rushed and Muddled

1. Knowledge of the Unseen (ílm al-ghayb)

Allāh táālā is the Knower of Unseen; His knowledge is Absolute, it is Infinite and not given by another and He Knows by Himself [*dhātī, ghayr mutanāhī, mustaqill*]. However, Allāh táālā has given some knowledge to His slaves as mentioned in the Qur'ān:

وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيُطْلِعَكُمْ عَلَى ٱلْغَيْبِ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَجْتَبِى مِن رُّسُلِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ

Allāh does not inform of the unseen to any [of you common folk];
however, He chooses among His Messengers, whom He wishes [to give such knowledge]?[328]

عَٰلِمُ ٱلْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَىٰ غَيْبِهِۦٓ أَحَدًا ۝ إِلَّا مَنِ ٱرْتَضَىٰ مِن رَّسُولٍ

He is the Knower of Unseen; he does not reveal His Knowledge of Unseen
to anyone – except to His beloved Messengers[329]

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[328] Sūrah Aāl Ímrān, 3:179. In *Tafsīr Bayđāwī*: Allah táālā will not give any of you the knowledge of unseen so that they can be aware of what is in the hearts - whether disbelief or faith; however, Allah táālā chooses whoever He wishes for His Message; and sends him revelation and Divine Inspiration and gives him partial knowledge of the unseen. [*baáđ al-mughayyabāt*].

[329] Sūrah Jinn, 72:26-27.

وَمَا هُوَ عَلَى ٱلْغَيْبِ بِضَنِينٍ

And he [Prophet ﷺ] is not niggardly in informing the unseen[330]

It is kufr to say that RasūlAllāh ﷺ did not have knowledge of unseen absolutely; as it negates the verses of the Qur'ān above and many ṣaĥīĥ ĥadīth. However, disagreement over the expanse of this 'knowledge of unseen' is a different issue.

> How much knowledge of the unseen ('ilm al-ghayb) did Allāh bestow...

> ...while the Deobandis say he had only limitary knowledge of it.

Whether it is deliberately said to mislead, or out of ignorance, Keller assumes that Deobandis are forthcoming with this *áqīdah* of *ilm al-ghayb* and squabble only about the extent of such knowledge. The truth is, that following Ismāýīl and Wahābīs, Deobandis insist that claiming knowledge of unseen for the Prophet is *shirk* and they try to suppress this distinction of *absolute/autonomous* and *granted* – and only when they are cornered will they grudgingly concede because negating it absolutely, will necessitate denial of Qur'ānic verses; even then, they come up with fancy explanations and flimsy excuses.

Regardless, the áqīdah they teach common people and in the words they use, it is almost always without qualification; but if any knowledgeable person challenges them, they will show an obscure or oblique reference that indicates the distinction. Additionally, they resort to word play "Knower of Unseen" and "Knowledge of the Unseen." Here too, Deobandis insinuate that the main dispute is in these terms, whereas, Alahazrat did not claim that the term "Knower of Unseen" is permissible for RasulAllah ﷺ. Ismāýīl Dihlawī says:

> Whoever says that the Prophet of Allāh or any imām or any elder knew things from the unseen, but they would not utter it respecting the sharīáh, such a person is very big liar; rather, nobody knows about the unseen except Allāh.
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>
> We learn from this ĥadīth that concerning any prophet or saint or imām or martyr, one should not have the belief that they knew unseen – rather, even about our Prophet himself nor mention this in his description.[331]

Rashid Aĥmad Gangohī says in *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah*:

> A person who believes that RasūlAllāh ﷺ had knowledge of the unseen [*ílm e ghayb*] is polytheist absolutely, and an apostate according to Ĥanafī imāms.
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>
> "Knowledge of unseen" is a characteristic [attribute] of Allāh táālā; to use this word for anyone else, even with a compatible explanation [*ta'wīl*] is not free from implications of polytheism.

[330] Sūrah Takwīr, 81:24. According to exegetes, *đanīn* means *bakhīl*; miserly, stingy.

[331] *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān,* p26 and p27.

> RasūlAllāh ﷺ did not have knowledge of the unseen – nor did he ever make such a claim. In the Book of Allāh and in many Ĥadīth, it is mentioned that he was not a knower of the unseen. And to hold a belief that he had knowledge of the unseen is explicit polytheism.
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>
> To prove ílm al-ghayb for anyone other than Allāh táālā is explicit polytheism.
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> … If Zayd believes that Allāh táālā had given knowledge [of unseen] to him, then it is a clear mistake but not kufr; and if he believes that he possessed that knowledge himself without being informed by Allāh táālā, then it is deemed to be kufr. Therefore, in the first case, the person's being imām [in prayer] is valid; and in the second case, such a person should not be made an imām, though one should withhold from calling him a kāfir and try to explain it favourably.[332]

This latter opinion of Gangohī cited above is weird – if a person believes that RasūlAllāh ﷺ had knowledge of unseen by himself, without being granted by Allāh táālā, even then he should not be called a kāfir! Such contradictions are common in Deobandi literature; contrast this with Alahazrat's lucid and unequivocal explanation:

> Yes, the claim of even a speck of knowledge for anyone without being given by Allāh táālā is certainly *kufr*. It is also an invalid belief that the knowledge of [anyone in the] creation can encompass the knowledge of Allāh táālā, and is against the opinion of most scholars. However, the knowledge about everything from the first day to the final day of judgement – that which has happened and shall happen, *mā kāna wa mā yakūn* – is only a small fragment from the infinite knowledge of Allāh táālā. This fragment is not comparable even to a billionth part of a drop of water in relation to a billion oceans. Indeed, this 'part' is itself a small part of the knowledge of Sayyidunā Muĥammad ﷺ. I have described all these issues in *Dawlatu'l Makkiyyah* and other books.[333]

The stance of Sunnis is clear, unambiguous and an overwhelming majority of scholars hold this opinion: that the knowledge of the Prophet ﷺ is granted by Allāh táālā and is not absolute or all-encompassing; it is not complete, but only partial; it is accident and not pre-eternal; it is mumkin and not wājib. Imām Nawawī was asked about the verse "***Say: No one in the heavens and the earth knows the unseen, except Allāh,***"[334] even though prophets have given information about what will happen on the morrow; he replied:

> It means that no one has absolute [or autonomous] knowledge, nor complete encompassing knowledge [of all things] except Allāh; as for the miracles of prophets and saints, it is because Allāh táālā has informed prophets and awliyā'a – and [their knowledge] is not autonomous…[335]

Alahazrat never claimed that RasūlAllāh ﷺ was given complete knowledge of the unseen; but Abu'l Ĥasan Nadwī still wrote:

> ..and he believed that RasulAllah ﷺ had complete knowledge of the unseen.[336]

Obviously, if he had written the truth, scholars outside the subcontinent would not be shocked – but with this false accusation, he could easily persuade those reading his work to consider Alahazrat as a deviant. Some of them went to Sayyid Aĥmad Barzanji in Madīnah and told him that Alahazrat deemed the knowledge of

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[332] *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah*, p228, p229, p238, p244, p241. These references are from the modern edition of the book.

[333] *Tamhīd e Īmān*, Imām Aĥmed Riđā.

[334] Sūrah Naml, 27:65.

[335] *Fatāwā Imām Nawawī*, p241.

[336] *Nuz'hatu'l Khawāţir,* 8/1180.

RasūlAllāh ﷺ to be equal to that of Allāh, ***except*** for the difference of *Ĥādith* and *qadīm*;[337] which Alahazrat refuted in *Ĥāsim al-Muftarī*. Alahazrat eloquently describes the Sunni áqīdah: the knowledge about everything from the first day until the final day of judgement – that which has happened and shall happen, *mā kāna wa mā yakūn* – is only a small fragment from the infinite knowledge of Allāh táālā. This fragment in comparison to Divine Knowledge is lesser than a billionth part of a drop of water in comparison to a billion oceans.

Thānawī's blasphemous statement was in this context of 'part' knowledge[338] – he said: one should clarify whether it is complete knowledge [*kull ílm e ghayb*] or just a little part [*baáz*] and if it is the latter, then what is so special about such 'part knowledge of the unseen' for the Prophet ﷺ? Such knowledge is possessed by animals and madmen. We shall discuss this blasphemy in more detail further, but we mention it here to highlight Deobandi aversion for this belief.

Deobandi fatāwā recklessly call such a belief as *kufr* and *shirk* without making proper distinction,[339] even if proof for such things is present in Ĥadīth and verses; and when confronted, they make up strange explanations to prove their aberrant fatāwā – and audaciously distort meanings of Ĥadīth to prove their elders right. In Ĥadīth of Muslim and Bukhārī, it is reported that RasūlAllāh ﷺ informed the audience of the *mā kāna wa mā yakūn,* but Ismāýīl Dihlawī says that claiming knowledge of unseen is polytheism; which is horrifying in its implication, but still Ismāýīl Dihlawī and Gangohī are imāms and Deobandis are innocent lambs, and Keller is unprejudiced. Sub'ĤānAllāh!

2. The Prophet is Present and Watching (Ĥāđir – nāżir)

Present and watching – these two terms are used in the meaning of 'knowledge and beholding' as explained by Ibn Áābidīn:

> ...that is, to mean: "Knower who beholds" according to Bazzaziyyah.[340]

To believe that Allāh táālā is physically present everywhere is not an Islamic belief; however, if a person calls upon Allāh táālā as 'Present and Watching,' it implies knowledge, not physical presence or physical sight and therefore, such a person will not be ruled kāfir:

> [If one says] O Present, O Watching, he will not be ruled kāfir.[341]

Keller has summarised the Sunni position well, and as usual, glosses over the Deobandi stance; Deobandis have ruled that it is *shirk* and kufr to believe in this even though there are Ĥadīth and verses proving that RasūlAllāh ﷺ beholds actions of his followers. Deobandi opinions are mentioned below in the spirit of fairness.

Ashraf Álī Thānawī says listing actions that are kufr and shirk:

> To call upon someone from far and to believe that they are informed [about it].[342]

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[337] that Allāh's knowledge is pre-eternal [*qadīm*] and that of RasūlAllāh ﷺ is an accident [*Ĥādith*].

[338] Though his fatwā was NOT an answer to either Alahazrat's fatwā or book.

[339] This is apart from the contradictions such as Gangohi's fatwā in the previous page.

[340] *Radd al-Muĥtār*, 6/408.

[341] Ibid. and also *Durr al-Mukhtār*, p351.

[342] *Bihishtī Zeywar*, 1/42.

Rashid Aĥmad Gangohī says concerning the salutation to the Prophet ﷺ in *tashahhud* in prayer:

> If someone believes that the Prophet ﷺ hears the salutation himself, then it is kufr – regardless of [the tense] whether he says: "Peace upon you" or "Peace upon the Prophet" [*as-salāmu alayka* or *as-salamu ála'n nabiyy*][343]

Ismāýīl Dihlawī says:

> ..to believe that [such an intercessor] can be 'present and watching' [*Ĥāđir-nāżir*] and prove that he has the power to dispense in affairs [*ţaşarruf*]; these things prove polytheism. Further, even if he believes that such a person [intercessor] is lesser than Allāh and His creation and His slave; in this issue there is no difference among saints and prophets, or jinn and Devils, or ghosts and fairies. That is, whoever deals with any of them such becomes a polytheist – whether he does it with prophets, saints, shaykhs, martyrs or ghosts and fairies.[344]

The above passage could be translated idiomatically – to demonstrate its brashness and ignorance, but I have tried to be as literal as possible. According to Ismāýīl, believing in *Ĥāđir-nāżir* and seeking help from intercessors is polytheism and such a person becomes a polytheist. It is this book Gangohī admires and staunchly believes in.

Now, Keller should make it clear whether he believes in *istighātha, istiáānah* or deems it polytheism; if it is the former, he becomes a mushrik according to Ismāýīl's fatwā, attested by Gangohī – whom he ardently defends. Keller should also make it clear whether or not this fatwā makes polytheist of his own shaykh, Sayyid Ábd al-Raĥmān al-Shāghourī. If he cannot criticise Deobandis, Keller should declare that he too – like other Wahābīs and Deobandis – considers this as shirk, instead of deceiving the common public by lamenting the takfīr of Wahābīs in the beginning of the article, and writing elaborate fairy tales to exonerate those self-same Wahābīs:

> It is the fitna or "strife" that destroyed previous faiths, and whose fire in Islamic times was put out with the defeat of the Kharijites, only to be revived on a wholesale scale almost a thousand years later by Wahhabi sect of Arabia in the eighteenth century,

Nowhere does Keller indicate that it was Ismāýīl and his Deobandi followers who promote Wahābī thought in the subcontinent, and scorn a number of things as polytheism and innovation which are accepted and validated by Sunni scholars worldwide. In 1884, Mawlānā Ábd al-Samīý wrote *Anwār al-Sātiáh,* proving the validity of practices such as Mawlid and donating reward to the deceased known as *fātiĥah*, and refuted Wahābī objections upon them; one such idea he refuted in the book was:

> They say that it is polytheism, if one believes that RasūlAllāh ﷺ may come to the place where Mawlid is recited; because only Allāh táālā is present everywhere and He has not given this Attribute of His to anyone else.[345]

He then goes on to give proofs that the Angel of Death is present in all places and by analogy it should not be far-fetched that RasūlAllāh ﷺ can also be present; at any rate, this belief cannot be polytheism because there are ĥadīth that prove that the Angel of Death can be present anywhere.

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[343] *Fatāwā Rashidiyyah*, p99, 1323 Edition; [also p243, Dār al-Ishāát, Karachi Edition].

[344] *Tafwiyatu'l Īmān*, p8.

[345] *Anwār al-Sāţiáh*, p355 in the contemporary edition, and p. 179 of the second edition published in 1307/1889.

> It is in *Mishkāt*: "The Angel of Death is present at the headside of believer as well as a that of a disbeliever." This is a lengthy ĥadīth; and Qāđī Thanāullāh mentions in *Tadhkiratu'l Mawtā*, a ĥadīth from Ţabarānī and Ibn Mandah which says: The Angel of Death told RasūlAllāh ﷺ, "There is no house – good or bad – towards which I do not pay attention. I see them day and night and recognise all, great or small, so well that even they do not know themselves..."[346]

He cites *Durr al-Mukhtār*:

> We learn from these ĥadīth that [after all] the Angel of Death, is a prominent angel [can be present everywhere]; see, even the Devil is present everywhere as mentioned in *Durr al-Mukhtār* in the chapter on prayer that the Devil is present with all sons of Ādam, except those whom Allāh safeguards; further it is written: The Devil has this power similar to the power given to the Angel of Death.[347]

And draws the following conclusion:

> This could be understood by an analogy in our physical world: if a man goes wherever from the east to the west on this earth, he will find the sun and the moon present everywhere – and if he says that the same moon and the same sun are present everywhere, according to your [Wahābī] principle, such a person should become a kāfir because he has said that the moon is everywhere.
>
> Whereas, the correct ruling is that he is neither a kāfir nor a polytheist, but a proper Muslim. Similarly, when the sun is present in all the seven continents, even though it is in the fourth heaven; the soul of the Prophet which is in the seventh *Íliyyīn*, if his blessed sight can behold the entire earth and see certain specific places where the celebration of Mawlid is being held and similar to the rays of sun encompassing the earth, witness [all this] why should it be far-fetched and impossible?

But Khalīl Aĥmad Ambethwi did not accept this analogy and refuting the above wrote the following abominable words which are explicitly blasphemous:

> **The outcome**: One should ponder, that by looking at the state of Satan and the Angel of Death, [and then] proving such encompassing knowledge of the earth[348] for the Pride of the World,[349] without any scriptural evidence[350] and by mere fallacious analogy – if this is not polytheism, then which part of faith is it? This extensiveness of knowledge for Satan and the Angel of Death is proven by scriptural proof; where is such scriptural proof for the extensiveness of the knowledge of the Pride of the World, thereby refuting all scriptural proofs and establish one polytheistic belief?[351]

Deobandis try to explain this passage sans the original context – but the fact remains that *Barāhīn* was written to refute *Anwār* and quotes from both books are given; even a simple minded or an uninitiated reader can notice that the comparison was indeed made to prove that Satan and the Angel of Death had more knowledge than RasūlAllāh ﷺ in this issue of being present and watching.[352]

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[346] Ibid. p. 356.

[347] Ibid. p. 357, vide *Durr al-Mukhtār*.

[348] *ílm-e-muĥīţ-e-zamīñ.*

[349] *fakhr-e-áālam* meaning RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

[350] *naşş.*

[351] *Barāhīn al-Qāţiáh*, p47, Published by Hashmi Publishers in 1304.

[352] Shaykh Ábd al-Ĥakīm Sharaf in his Arabic work *Min Áqāýidi Ahl al-Sunnah* has explained this in detail with proofs.

3. The Prophet's will and control (mukhtār al-kull)

Allāh táālā has given the Prophet ﷺ a prominent rank and given him the authority to ordain anything he wishes and the Qur'ān is witness to this belief. But Deobandi elders degrade and diminish the lofty rank of the Prophet ﷺ. Their high priest, Ismāýīl has compared the Prophet to be lower than a speck of dust in the Presence of Allāh – even though he ﷺ is the most beloved to Allāh in the creation:

> …it should be known with certainty, that everyone in the creation – whether great or small; all of them are more contemptible [*dhalīl*] than a menial cobbler in the Presence of Allāh.[353]

Ismāýīl himself has clarified in many places that 'great' – *ba□ā* – refers to esteemed people or honourable people such as prophets and saints:

> …it can be understood from this verse, that prophets and saints whom Allāh táālā has made high [*baḏā*]…all slaves, great and ordinary [big and small] are equal; weak and helpless without any authority…in these things as well, all slaves – esteemed and common [*baḏā/choṯā*] – are all equal, unaware and ignorant[354]

Ismāýīl Dihlawī has also said in the same book:

> If anyone believes that anybody in the creation has the authority to dispense in affairs [*taṣarruf*] and believes that such [entity] is his supporter [*wakīl*] and believes in it, then he has committed polytheism – even if he does not deem such [a person] as equal to Allāh, or has any power against Him.[355]
>
> …is absolutely unjust because this proves such a great rank of such a great person for such worthless people.[356]
>
> He, whose name is Muĥammad or Álī, has no authority to do anything[357]
>
> Or if one believes about the Prophet that sharīáh is by his command – and made lawful whatever he wished and it would become binding upon his followers. All such things necessitate polytheism; rather, the real Sovereign is Allāh and the Prophet is only an informer.[358]

Alahazrat points out that Ismāýīl, in his fanatic zeal does not even admit that such power is possible even when granted by Allāh táālā:

> Alas, if the wretch had only said: 'anyone who deems that someone has power [to do things] by himself, and dispenses in affairs absolutely and independently is a polytheist,' indeed, it would be right and truth…[359]

Ismāýīl Dihlawī says:

> To respect the woods around the city – that is to abstain from hunting in woods or cutting its trees or pull out the grass or graze the cattle – all these things are ordained by Allāh for His own worship…then to go to such places from far away with the intention to visit them; or to illuminate such places or adorn or drape them or

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[353] *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān*, p14. In Urdu, *baḏā/choṯā* means big/small, great/small, elder/younger, esteemed/lowly etc.

[354] Ibid. p24-25.

[355] Ibid. p28. That is, even if one believes that a person [nabiy or waliy] is neither equal to Allāh, nor has any power against Him, ***even then*** such a person is a polytheist if he as much as believes that he can dispense in affairs with Allāh's permission.

[356] Ibid. p29. *dakhal* is used here idiomatically to mean 'authority to dispense in affairs'.

[357] Ibid. p42. Obviously, he refers to Sayyidunā RasūlAllāh ﷺ and Mawlā Álī.

[358] Ibid. p47.

[359] *Kawkabatu'sh Shihābiyyah*, *Fatāwā Ridawiyyah.*

> erect a pole in their name, or walk backwards from such a place; to kiss their grave or fan with peacock feathers or affix a canopy over it or kiss the threshold or stand there with hands folded or entreat them for favour or take residence in the vicinity [*mujāwar*] or respect the forest surrounding the places [of any prophet or ghost or fairy] or does similar things, then such person has committed polytheism and it is known as polytheism in worship [*ishrāk fi'l íbādāt*] [360]

Here, Ismāýīl considers travelling from far off places to visit the Prophet ﷺ or to respect the forest surrounding his city, as shirk; even though a number of ṣaĥīĥ ĥadīth prove that RasūlAllāh ﷺ made Madīnah a sanctuary.[361]

4. Intercession of the Prophet in this world and the next (tawassul - shafāáh)

Keller downplays the poison that Ismāýīl Dihlawī poured in the subcontinent and tries to ignore the blatantly unislamic beliefs in Ismāýīl's book, where he says:

> Even kāfirs in the time of Messenger of Allāh did not believe that their idols were equal to Allāh; they too believed that [idols were] creation and slaves; nor did they profess that [such idols] had power against Allāh. Rather, they would call upon them and make vows and were beholden to them, they would deem [such idols] as their advocates and intercessors – this was their disbelief and polytheism. **Thus, if anyone does a similar thing, even if they believe they [intercessors] are the slaves and creation of Allāh – then he and Abū Jahl are equal in polytheism.**[362]

Elsewhere in the same book, Ismāýīl says:

> Allāh táālā ordered him to describe his state in front of all people clearly so that the state of everyone else is known; so, he said: "I have no power, nor any knowledge of unseen. The state of my power[363] is such that I do not have any power to benefit or harm my own self, then how can I do anything for anybody else?"[364]

Ismāýīl explicitly denies intercession of prophets on account of their closeness or esteem near Allāh:

> ...that is the king accepts the intercession on account of [someone being] beloved, thinking that it is better to swallow my anger and forgive the thief than suffer the sorrow of upsetting my beloved; this kind of intercession is not possible for anyone and in any way in the Grand Court of the Almighty. If anyone thinks that someone can intercede with Allāh [because of their being beloved] such a person is also a polytheist and ignoramus [*mushrik - jāhil*]

Even though, numerous ĥadīth proclaim the intercession of His beloved Prophet and the verse:

وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَىٰ ۞

And soon, your Sustainer shall give you so much that you shall be pleased[365]

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[360] *Tafwiyatu'l Īmān*, p11.

[361] See *Munyah al-Labīb* in which Alahazrat proves that RasūlAllāh can make anything lawful or unlawful and Qur'ānic verses clearly stipulate that such a command is binding: "***Whoever obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allāh.***" [Sūrah Nisā'a 4:80].

[362] *Tafwiyatu'l Īmān*. p8. In other words, if anybody deems even the Prophet ﷺ as an intercessor, even with the belief that he is the slave of Allāh táālā and His creation – such a person is an idolator and equal to Abū Jahl.

[363] That is, lack thereof.

[364] Ibid. p24.

[365] Sūrah Đuĥā, 93:5.

Ibn Kathīr in the tafsīr of this verse says that this refers to intercession [*shafāāh*] and Qurţubī in his tafsīr mentions a Ĥadīth in which RasulAllah ﷺ said:

> Then, by Allāh, I shall not be pleased as long as one amongst my followers is in fire.

Qurţubī also mentions a Ĥadīth narrated by Ábdullāh ibn Ámr

> Allāh táālā told Jibrīl: Go to Muĥammad and tell him: "Verily Allāh táālā tells you: Verily, we shall make you pleased concerning your followers and We shall not displease you".[366]

Rejection of intercession is engraved in the Deobandi Constitution[367] which Rashid Gangohī advocates 'to read and to keep this book on one's person is essentially faith itself.'[368] Despite such explicit kufr, Sunni scholars withheld from making takfīr of such an ignoramus merely on the rumour that he had repented and retracted from some issues; but Gangohī vehemently denies the rumour and asserts that every issue in this book is correct; someone asked him whether the rumour was true and he replied:

> In my opinion, all the issues and matters [*masāyil*] discussed in the book are valid and correct, even though externally, there is harshness in some issues. That he repented from some of those issues is the slander [or false accusation] of heretics. If a person does not respect him [Ismāýīl] as an elder because of false stories that he has heard [about him], he shall be excused; but if he holds a belief contrary to the book, he is a heretic and fāsiq.[369]

Gangohī also said:

> *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān* is an extremely excellent book; and has irrefutable proofs against polytheism and innovation [*shirk-bidáh*] and is completely in accordance with the Book of Allāh and the Ĥadīth. **To keep it with oneself, to read it and to act upon [its exhortations] is in essence faith itself [*áyn islām*] and anyone who speaks ill about keeping this book is a fāsiq and a heretic.** If someone, due to ignorance does not understand the beauty of this book it should be deemed a failure of his understanding, not the error of the author. Prominent scholars and righteous people have liked this book; if a misguided person speaks ill of this book, he is himself a misguiding heretic.[370]

In another fatwā:

> The book *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān* is an extremely excellent and a truthful book; it causes strengthening and amendment of faith and the meaning of Qur'ān and Ĥadīth is entirely found in this book...[371]

According to Gangohī, if anyone criticises this book, he becomes a heretic and is a *fāsiq*; and the book is beautiful and beyond reproach – as if it is as inviolable as the Qur'ān! According to Gangohī everything in this book is fully concordant with Qur'ān and Ĥadīth – rather all the meanings of the Qur'ān and Ĥadīth are found in this book, and is praised by righteous scholars.

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[366] Cf. *Tafsīr Qurţubī* from *Ṣaĥīĥ Muslim* #346, The Book of Faith.

[367] *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān.*

[368] *is kā rakhnā aur padhnā aur ámal karnā áyn islām hai aur mūjib ajr kā hai; is ke rakhne ko jo burā kahtā hai woh fāsiq aur bidátī hai.*

[369] *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah*, 1/65.

[370] *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah,* 1/122.

[371] Ibid. p45.

The truth is that nobody except a Wahābī will ever like it, let alone praise such a revolting book. Gangohī's love and fervour is reserved only for such an obnoxious person who describes prophets and awliyā'a as lowly beings, comparing them to cobblers and scavengers; and of course Keller's sympathies are only with such faithless people; but if a self-respecting Muslim gets agitated at such insults upon his religion and refutes these things, he may have to put up with the following insinuations by Keller:

- the need to put oneself up by putting someone else down;

- thirst for fame as a "scholar";

- the feeling of power through frightening those one informs;

- the thrill of their need to resort to one's knowledge to get all the details;

- the need to prove one's group is superior to anyone else;

- malice, envy, or arrogance.

Ismāýīl writes that if anybody seeks the intercession of creation, even it were the Prophet ﷺ himself, such a person is equal to Abū Jahl – that would include Keller's shaykhs and teachers – unless he has changed his allegiance to become a staunch Deobandi and a die-hard admirer of Ismāýīl Dihlawī. Once again, Keller makes up his own summaries – where is the qualification in Ismāýīl's work? He states these things absolutely and his blind followers follow him blindly on his march to hell. Suppose Keller – with his soft spot for blasphemers – suggests that it should be interpreted favourably, the guru himself has rejected Keller's support and trashed it with utter contempt:

> It is a futile [claim] to utter a disrespectful thing expressly [*żāhir*] and then say that it means something else. There are other occasions for conundrums and riddles; nobody talks in puns and equivoques with one's own father or the king; such things are said to friends and buddies – not father and king.[372]

One would like to know why Keller is so eager to exonerate those people who would deem him a polytheist and an idolator.

~

Keller takes a brief detour at this point:

Two more `aqida-related questions remain to be mentioned and to understand them, we have to return for a moment to a previously made distinction

إذا لم تستطع شيئاً فَدَعهُ ❁ وَجاوزهُ إلى ما تستطيعُ

If you are not capable of doing something, leave it **: :** and proceed to do something within your capacity

[372] *Tafwiyatu'l Īmān*, p56.

Incidentally, we too shall take a short detour and return for a moment to my paper, *Truth About a Lie,*[373] where fundamentals of kalām and basic definitions were explained. There, we quoted the opening lines of *Umm al-Barāhīn*:

> Know that these three definitions cover the rational argument:
>
> a) **wujūb/wājib**: necessary
>
> b) **istiĥālah/mustaĥīl**: impossible
>
> c) **jāyiz/mumkin**: contingent
>
> ***wājib***, whose non-existence is inconceivable; ***mustaĥīl***, whose existence is inconceivable; ***jāyiz***, whose existence and non-existence are both conceivable and possible.[374]

Sanūsī explains that 'rule' in this context means to attest to something or to negate it. Such a 'rule' is due to the reasons: revealed law (*sharīáh*), habit (*áādah*), and intellect (*áql*). Therefore, a ruling falls into one of these three classes: *sharaýī, áādī* or *áqlī*. It is important to know that the first two classes, namely *sharaýī* and *áādī* are not discussed in rational theology (*kalām*); in this science, we deal only with the rational argument, that is, *Ĥukm al-áqlī*. Imām Sanūsī describing reasons that lead to heresies says:

> [One of the reason] is ignorance of the fundamental principles of rational rulings: that is the knowledge of what is necessary, contingent and impossible.[375]

In *Wustā*, he says:

> (an understanding) of these three terms is essential for any discussion in the science of kalām[376]

He explains the above statement himself thus:

> Undoubtedly, the idea[377] of these three concepts and the knowledge of the quiddity[378] of these terms, is the fundamental principle of the science of *kalām*. Because, when a scholar discusses an issue, he will have to describe it in one of these three terms, to attest or negate or derive a corollary of the issue; and if that scholar does not know the true (definition) of these terms, he will not be able to understand what has been attested or negated (in this science). Imām al-Ĥaramayn considered the comprehension of these three terms as fundamental intelligence, and one who does not understand these is not counted among the discerning.

Furthermore, *wājib/mustaĥīl* can be intrinsic or extrinsic; when something contingent [*mumkin*] becomes *wājib* or *mustaĥīl* due to an extrinsic reason, it is termed extrinsic *wājib/mustaĥīl*. Naturally, *mumkin* cannot be sub-categorised as intrinsic or extrinsic – yet, there are two descriptions for mumkin: intrinsically possible – *mumkin dhātī* and existentially possible – *mumkin istiýdādī*.[379]

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[373] This paper is currently being revised to correct a number of typographical errors and formatted for clarity; however, citations are relevant and will remain unchanged – even if they are reworded.

[374] *Umm al-Barāhīn,* Imām Sanūsī.

[375] *Sharĥ al-Muqaddimāt*, Sanūsī. p77.

[376] *Sharĥ al-Wustā*, p78.

[377] *taşawwur* which in this context, is to have an idea, the notion or the concept in the mind.

[378] *Ĥaqāyiq*, pl. of *Ĥaqīqah* meaning reality of something or the quiddity of such a thing.

[379] *Mumkin* is also known as jāyiz. *imkān istiýdādī* is also known as *imkān al-wuqūýī.* It should be noted

It is obvious that Keller does not properly understand basic kalām terminology and therefore makes blunders; he doesn't differentiate between ***īmān*** of Abū Lahab and his punishment:

> Third, we saw that there is also another class of the impossible, namely things which, while not impossible in themselves (mustahil dhati), *become* impossible because of Allah's eternal decision that they are not to be, such as the *iman* of Abu Lahab

Imām Sanūsī says:

> This wājib that is mentioned is *wājib dhātī* [intrinsically necessary]. As for *wājib áraḍī*, it is that which is related to the Divine Will of Allāh táālā – like the ***punishment*** of Abu Jahl. Because, when we look at the innate nature of this thing – it is *jāyiz*, possible; both the possibility of punishment and its absence are rational. However, when we look at the Divine Will of Allāh táālā to punish him, as has been informed to us by the truthful and veritable Messenger– blessings of Allāh táālā upon him and peace – this becomes necessary [*wājib*] and it cannot be conceived that it will not come to be. Indeed, it is not necessary to consider something *wājib dhātī* only upon proviso; because by default and when mentioned absolutely, *wājib* does not mean anything except *wājib dhātī*. And it cannot be considered *wājib áraḍī* unless it is qualified thus expressly.[380]

While it is true that ***pardon*** of Abū Lahab appears to be intrinsically possible, Allāh táālā has however Willed to punish him and has conveyed to us via his Divine Speech. And because of its relation to the Will and Knowledge of Allāh táālā – which are both Pre-eternal, pardon is *mustaĥīl dhātī*.

Anyway, does Keller know why this relatively obscure kalām issue became prominent in the subcontinent? Why did a debate on these issues ensue? Who cast the first stone? Keller might not even have paused to think about it and made up his own script; but do spare a look at the facts:

Ismāýīl Dihlawī claimed in his *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān* that Allāh ﷻ can create billions of Muĥammad ﷺ with a single command:

> The greatness of the King of kings is such that in one instant and by one command 'Be,' if He so wishes, He can create billions of prophets and saints and jinns and angels equal to Jibrīl and Muĥammad ﷺ.[381]

1. Sunni scholars refuted that filthy book and Faḍl al-Ĥaqq Khayrābādī was foremost in refuting Ismāýīl; Shaykh Khayarābādī was arguably the most learned scholar of rational sciences in his time which is acknowledged even by his enemies.[382] He refuted Ismāýīl's ludicrous notion in his work: *Taĥqīq al-Fatwā bi Ibṭāl al-Taghwā* and one of the arguments he made was:

   > If bringing into existence and creation [*yījād*, *takwīn*] of someone entirely similar to the honourable Prophet ﷺ, and **<u>in all his attributes</u>** is possible, then it would necessitate that Allāh táālā would utter falsehood. Because,

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[380] *Sharĥ al-Muqaddimāt*, p77.

[381] *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān*, p31. Notice that the yokel does not even have the proper etiquette of mentioning the Prophet's name, but still Deobandis regard him as an imām. Keller will surely not mind – etiquette and adab is reserved only for other people, and particularly blasphemers. Anybody can blaspheme against the Prophet and Keller will comfort them: 'Don't worry; as long as you did not intend to insult the Prophet ﷺ, you can say anything.' *lā ĥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh.*

[382] *Nuzhatu'l Khawāṭir*, Ábd al-Ĥayy Lucknawi, #687, 8/1063. 'In his time, he was peerless in rational sciences and Arabic language related subjects.' Yet, father and son freely indulge in slandering Sunni scholars for the crime of refuting Ismāýīl Dihlawī whom they term a "righteous scholar." We seek the refuge of Allāh táālā, the Powerful Avenger – *ázīzu'n dhu'ntiqām*.

anyone who is completely similar in all his ﷺ attributes, and equal to him would certainly be a prophet; and certainly, a new prophet after RasūlAllāh ﷺ would necessitate the falsehood of the Qur'ānic text: ***But he is the Messenger of Allāh and Seal of all prophets.***[383] But, falsehood is a flaw and therefore intrinsically impossible for Allāh táālā.[384]

2. Ismāýīl Dihlawī, in response questioned why should falsehood be *muĥāl* for Allāh táālā? To prove his point, he wrote in *Yak Rozī* which was ostensibly written to refute Mawlānā Fađl al-Ĥaqq:

   After giving information, it is possible that Allāh táālā can discard it. Therefore, the saying that 'Creation similar to him can exist' does not fundamentally belie any text; and the negation of the Qur'ān [*salb e Qur'ān*] after revelation is also a possibility.[385]

3. Further, in the same work by Ismāýīl:

   We do not accept that such a falsehood is impossible [*muĥāl*] for Allāh táālā. Because, to make any matter or information contrary to what has occurred,[386] and to inform angels and prophets about it, is not removed from the Divine Power of Allāh táālā; otherwise, it would necessitate that the power of humans is more than the Power of the Almighty.

   In other words, humans can lie and if Allāh táālā could not lie, it would necessitate that humans have power which the Creator does not.

4. Further, in the same work:

   They enumerate the absence of falsehood [*ádam e kazib*] as an Attribute of Perfection [for Allāh taala] and such an absence of falsehood is considered as praise of Allāh táālā comparing with dumb people or inanimate objects.[387] The Attribute of Perfection is when a person has the power to utter falsehood but owing to reasons and wisdom, he abstains from uttering a false thing – such a person deserves praise. Compare this to a person whose tongue is useless [i.e., dumb] and who wishes to utter false speech, but has no voice; or if someone holds his mouth shut [such that he cannot utter anything] – sensible people do not deem such a person as praiseworthy. Rather, praiseworthy thing is to [voluntarily] avoid the flaw of falsehood and not taint oneself by uttering falsehood.[388]

5. Mawlānā Fađl al-Ĥaqq continued to debate Ismāýīl until the later was silenced. But Ismāýīl's student Ĥaydar Álī Tonki wrote a refutation of *Taĥqīq al-Fatwā*, which was refuted by Fađl al-Ĥaqq in his *Imtināá al-Nażīr*.

6. Years later when Deobandi leaders defended Ismāýīl and tried to prove *imkān al-kadhib* as a valid áqīdah, Alahazrat refuted them; but he was certainly not the first Sunni scholar to do so, nor alone among contemporaries.

Let us now examine Keller's analysis of the last two issues.

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[383] Sūrah Aĥzāb, 33:40.

[384] *Taĥqīq al-Fatwā bi Ibţāl al-Ţaghwā.* We shall discuss the issue in more detail further under the sixth issue in Keller's list.

[385] *Yak Rozi*, p17.

[386] Which is the definition of a lie or falsehood: to give information contrary to actual occurrence.

[387] Because the dumb folk and inanimate objects cannot utter anything including falsehood; thus if falsehood is not within the Lord's Power, it is similar to the impotence of the dumb or inanimate things.

[388] Ibid. p17-18.

5. Possibility of falsehood in Allāh's Speech (imkān al-kadhib)

It is intrinsically, essentially impossible for falsehood in Divine Speech; falsehood is precluded from Divine Power. Deobandis, following their master, Ismāýīl Dihlawī claim that falsehood is included in Divine Power; when refuted by Sunnis, they make up fancy interpretations and explanations from fantasy land to defend this belief.

> ...and indeed all Muslims, agree that Allah *never lies*...

How does Keller know this? If it is because, Allāh táālā has informed us that He will not lie, what is the guarantee that He will not lie in *this* piece of information – because it is anyway, in His Power to lie?[389]

> He has informed us of by saying, "His word is the truth" (Qur'an 6:73), and many other Qur'anic verses.

If it is not intrinsically impossible for Allāh táālā to lie, and there is a hypothetical possibility that He can lie, how can you prove that His saying is true?

> ...while the only disagreement is whether (a) this is intrinsically impossible (mustahil dhati), or whether (b) this is not intrinsically impossible, but only *contingently* impossible (mustahil 'aradi)

Despite being totally ignorant about the whole issue, he wants to preach to us and teach us what he himself does not know. This is one of the disagreements, and this spawns a number of issues in áqīdah which only the taṣawwuf of Nuh Keller can tolerate – for example, Deobandis believe that Allāh táālā should have the power to do anything a human can do, otherwise, according to their logic, humans would become more powerful than Allāh. The delicate disposition of "Sufis" may be disturbed if we illustrate the consequences of such claims; I do not like to do this either, but a block of wood cannot be cleaved with a butter knife:

- Humans eat, drink, defecate, marry, die – according to Deobandis, if their lord did not have power to do this, it would mean that Deobandis are more powerful than their lord.[390]
- Humans commit polytheism and fashion idols – according to Deobandis, if their lord did not have power to commit idolatry or prostrate to idols, his power would be lesser than that of humans.

Keller thinks that we are quibbling about terms – who will explain Ṭāhir Gayāvī's metaphor[391] to him?

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[389] *Al-íyādhu billāh*, here I am posing a question challenging the Neo-Mutazilite Nuh Keller's heretical belief.

[390] In *Juhd al-Muqill*, Mahmud al-Ĥasan Deobandi says that "to commit indecencies is within Divine Power." See Appendix C.

[391] Ṭāhir Gayāvī, a well-known Deobandi orator/debater said in a public video: "If a man is able to have intercourse but does not sleep with a woman he is not married to, will you call him an adulterer? Mere power to do does not necessitate that he does it." He continues: "...these people [Sunnis] say that Allāh speaks truth in duress [*majbūri*] and such that even if He wishes to [lie] He cannot..." He further says: "...similar to the young man who does not fornicate, if one accuses him of not committing it because he is impotent - then this saying that he is impotent [*nā-mard*] which is a flaw for him. Similarly, these people [Sunnis] wish to make an impotent man [*nā-mard*] of Allāh táālā and that He speaks truth in duress [*majburi*]'.

> Rashid Ahmad Gangohī of the Deobandis seems to have held the latter position,

'Seems,' it seems. Keller does not know for sure, but he will hazard a guess, nevertheless. Notice, that he is clueless that the whole issue goes back to Ismāýīl Dihlawī and debated even before Gangohī was born.

> ... it is nevertheless *contingently impossible*, since He has informed us of His truthfulness in the Qur'an.

Even if we ignore his ineptitude in kalām terminology, we still have to ask: Is it *contingently impossible* only because Allāh táālā has already said it in the Qur'ān that He is Truthful? In other words, if only He did not mention in the Qur'ān that He is Truthful, He could lie – in other words, falsehood is out of His power because He has already made a commitment. Ismāýīl's argument was less absurd when he said that the Lord can replace such verses without anybody's knowledge! *al-íyādhu billāh*.

> Unfortunately for Muslim unity in India, Gangohī's concept of the *jawaz 'aqli* or "hypothetical possibility" of God's lying was mistakenly translated into Arabic by Ahmad Reza Khan as *imkan al-kadhib*, which in Arabic means the "factual possibility of [God's] lying"

Alahazrat Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khan's *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn* was written[392] in 1323/1906. If we go by Keller's theatrical depiction, prior to this fatwā, there was no conflict in India and Muslims were united; nobody knew the meaning of Wahābism or takfīr. It was Alahazrat who divided the Muslims of India and as Nadwī said, raised the flag of takfīr of all and sundry. Ismāýīl Dihlawī, Imām Fađl al-Ĥaqq Khayrābādī, Imām Fađl al-Rasūl Badāyūnī, Shāh Makhşuşullāh, Shaykh Aĥmad Saýīd Mujaddidī, Shaykh Rashīduddīn are all fictitious people – in fact, India missed the 19th century. But who has time for history and facts?

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[392] *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn* is a fatwā extracted from another work *Mustanad* along with attestations of scholars of Ĥaramayn.

Condensed Timeline: History of the Conflict

	1172 / 1763	Shāh Walīyullāh Dihlawī passes away (1114-1172/1703-1763)
	1193 / 1779	Ismāʕīl Dihlawī is born
1785 CE / 1200 AH	1239 / 1824	Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz Dihlawī passes away (1159-1239/1745-1824)
	1240 / 1825	*Taqwiyatu'l Īmān* of Ismāʕīl Dihlawī is published for the first time, igniting the fire of sectarianism in India
		Shaykh Faḍl al-Ĥaqq Khayrābādī refutes Ismāʕīl in *Taĥqīq al-Fatwā bi Ibṭāl al-Ţaghwā*
		Yak Rozi, in which Ismāʕīl Dihlawī tries to prove that falsehood is included in Divine Power; Allāh can lie
		Ṣirāţ e Mustaqīm of Ismāʕīl Dihlawī (Purportedly co-authored by his illiterate shaykh, Sayyid Aĥmed Barelwi)
	1246 / 1831	Ismāʕīl Dihlawī is killed in Balakot, aged 53
	1264 / 1847	Shāh Faḍl ar-Rasūl Badāyūnī writes *Bawāriq al-Muĥammadiyyah*
	1265 / 1848	Shāh Faḍl ar-Rasūl Badāyūnī writes *Sayf al-Jabbār*
	1270 / 1854	Shaykh Raĥmatullāh Kīrānwī (1233-1308 /1817-1890) defeats a Christian missionary in the famous debate of Agra
		Mūtaqad al-Muntaqad of Shāh Faḍl ar-Rasūl Badāyūnī is published
	1272 / 1856	Alahazrat Imām Aĥmed Riḍā Khān al-Barayławī is born
	1273 / 1857	The First War of Indian Independence; also known as Sepoy Mutiny
	1278 / 1861	Shaykh Faḍl al-Ĥaqq Khayrābādī (1212-1278/1797-1861) martyred in exile on Andaman Islands by the British
	1283 / 1866	The School of Deoband is founded by Qāsim Nānotwī, Rashīd Aĥmed Gangohī and some others
	1290 / 1872	*Taĥdhīr an-Nās* by Qāsim Nānotwi is published
	1291 / 1873	*Tanbīh al-Juhhāl* is published in which Shaykh Ĥāfiẓ Bakhsh refutes Nanotwi's *Taĥdhīr*
	1297 / 1879	Qāsim Nānotwi dies
1882 CE / 1300 AH	1300 / 1882	*Ibṭāl e Aghlāṭ e Qāsimiyyah* published by Shaykh Ábd al-Ghafūr, including attestation of Ábd al-Ĥayy Lucknawī
	1302 / 1884	*Anwār as-Sāţiáh* (First Edition) published by Shaykh Ábd as-Samīʕ Rāmpūrī
	1304 / 1886	*Barāhīn al-Qāţiáh* is published by Khalīl Aĥmed Ambethwi; attested by Rashīd Aĥmed Gangohī
	1306 / 1888	The Debate at Bahāwalpur in which Shaykh Ghulām Dastagīr Qasaurī defeats Deobandis
	1307 / 1889	Shaykh Aĥmed Ĥasan Kānpūrī refutes *imkān kadhib* in *Tanzīh ar-Raĥmān án Shāyibati'l Kadhibi wa'n Nuqṣān*
		Maĥmūd al-Ĥasan Deobandī writes *Juhd al-Muqill* in reply to *Tanzīh*
		Ṣamṣām al-Qādib li Ra-asi'l Muftarī Ála'llāh al-Kadhib by Sayyid Barakāt Aĥmed Tonkī
		Újālatu'r Rākib fī Imtināáyi Kadhibi'l Wājib by Muftī Muĥammad Ábdullāh Tonkī
		Second Edition of *Anwār as-Sāţiáh* by Mawlānā Ábd as-Samīʕ Rāmpūrī; includes attestations from *Ĥaramayn*
	1307 / 1889	Alahazrat writes *Sub'ĥān as-Subbūĥ*; decrees that belief in *imkān kadhib* is heresy but withholds from takfīr
	1308 / 1890	*Taqdīs al-Wakīl án Tawhīn ar-Rashīdi wa'l Khalīl* by Mawlānā Ghulām Dastagīr Qasaurī with attestations
		Fatwā of Rashīd Gangohī surfaces, where he does not repudiate *wuqūú*; Sunni scholars make takfīr
	1309 / 1892	*Bawāriqu'l Lāmiáh liman Arāda Iţfāyi Anwār as-Sāţiáh* by Mawlānā Nazīr Aĥmed Rāmpūrī refuting Deobandis
	1310 / 1893	The founding of *Nadwatu'l Úlamā* in Lucknow; Alahazrat and other Sunni scholars attend the first conference
	1311 / 1894	The second assembly of Nadwah; Sunni scholars boycott after the agenda of inclusivism is revealed
	1313 / 1896	*Fatāwā al-Ĥaramayn* of Alahazrat and attestations (Deobandis are still not ruled kāfir)
	1319 / 1901	Ashraf Álī Thānawī writes *Ĥifẓu'l Īmān*
	1320 / 1902	Alahazrat's annotations titled *Mustanad* on *Mūtaqad* of Imām Faḍl ar-Rasūl; Takfir of Deobandi elders
	1323 / 1905	Alahazrat goes on his second Ĥajj and obtains attestations for the fatwā part from *Mustanad*
		Rashīd Gangohi dies
	1324 / 1906	Alahazrat writes *Dawlatu'l Makkiyyah* and major scholars attest it, and the Sharif of Mecca approves of it
		Returning to India, attestations published in the form of *Ĥusāmu'l Ĥaramayn* with facing Urdu translation
	1325 / 1907	*Muhannad* purportedly written, but is not published
	1326 / 1908	Alahazrat writes *Tamhīd e Īmān*
	1328 / 1909	The Debate at Moradabad is scheduled but Deobandis abdicate.
		Framework for the debate and review of the situation is summarised by Alahazrat in *Ab'ĥās e Akhīrah*
	1329 / 1910	According to Deobandi claims, *Muhannad* is published
	1340 / 1921	Alahazrat passes away
	Post 1921	*Daf' at-Talbīsāt*, Mawlānā Naʕīmuddīn Murādābādī refutes the lies and deception in *Muhannad*

It can be seen clearly in the chronology that the issue of *imkān kadhib* was debated years before Alahazrat was born, and the ideas of Gangohī and his friends were well-known in Ĥaramayn and their refutations preceded *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*; yet Keller knows what none of us know:

> Unfortunately for Muslim unity in India, Gangohi's concept of the *jawaz 'aqli* or "hypothetical possibility" of God's lying was mistakenly translated into Arabic...

The term *jawāz áqlī* is a rational category, similar to *wājib áqlī* and *muĥāl áqlī*; and the latter two terms are classified in two major categories each. *Jawāz áqlī* is also known as *mumkin áqlī* and it can be either *mumkin dhātī* or *mumkin wuqūýī* which is also known as *mumkin istiýdādī.*

Ījī discusses[393] the concept of *mumkin li dhātih* (contingent by nature) in *Mawāqif* as quoted below. It should be noted, that the *dhātih* (intrinsically) here is not vis-à-vis *mumkin li ghayrih*. In his marginalia of *Sharĥ al-Mawāqif*, Ĥasan Chalpi says:[394]

> **{I say, imkān dhātī (contingent intrinsically)...}**[395] here, the specification of 'intrinsic' for *imkān dhātī* (intrinsically contingent) is to caution against *imkān istiýdādī;*[396] not against *imkān bi'l ghayr*.[397]

Jurjānī explains the concept in his commentary thus:[398]

> ...so *imkān dhātī* is not meant here at all, simply because there is no *mumkin bi'l ghayr*, extrapolating [on the categories of] *wājib bi'l ghayr*[399] or *imtināá bi'l ghayr.*[400] The secret here is: that *wājib bi'l ghayr* and *imtināá bi'l ghayr* are effected upon a *mumkin*[401] and that which is not *mustaĥīl*. Because it is the *mumkin* that can exist or not exist; and is equally poised concerning the essence of that thing [the contingent thing] to exist or not exist.

Siyālkūtī[402] in his marginalia on Jurjānī's commentary writes:

> that is if it was intrinsically contingent [*imkān dhātī*], this extraneous clause would then have an influence on the contingent nature of that thing. And what follows is invalid because, we do not have conditional

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[393] *Mawāqif*, p71.

[394] *Sharĥ al-Mawāqif*, 3/179. Marginalia by Ĥasan Chalpī ibn Muĥammad Shāh al-Fannārī

[395] This is the text of *Sharĥ al-Mawāqif.*

[396] *imkān istiýdādī* is also known as *imkān al-wuqūýī.* Note that a thing can be contingent intrinsically does not necessarily mean that it will come into existence; however, it can be transformed to *wājib bi'l ghayr* or *mumtaniý bi'l ghayr* due to an external reason. Contingent existentially means: that if its existence is supposed, it cannot be transformed into either *wājib* or *mustaĥīl*; whether *dhātī* or *árađī* in either cases of existence and non-existence.

[397] That is there is no thing as *imkān bi'l ghayr*.

[398] *Sharĥ al-Mawāqif*, 3/180 ; The Third Rank; The Fourth Objective: Discussion about *mumkin li dhātih*.

[399] *wājib árađī.*

[400] *muĥāl árađī* or *mumtaniý bi'l ghayr.*

[401] that is: only a *mumkin* can be transformed into *mustaĥīl árađī/imtināá bi'l ghayr* or *wājib árađī/wājib bi'l ghayr* because of extraneous reasons. and this is because only *mumkin* can either exist or not-exist; when an extraneous constraint is applied, it simply becomes impossible to exist or necessary to exist.

[402] Marginalia of Abdu'l Ĥakīm Siyalkūtī on *Sharĥ al-Mawāqif*, 3/180.

contingent[403] [*mumkin li ghayrih*] in describing 'contingent' as it is in the case of necessary and impossible [*wājib, imtināá*] which are caused due to [presence of] an external condition or dependency; or absence thereof.[404]

Moreover, it is only *mumkin dhātī* that can transform into *mustaĥīl* or *wājib* not *mumkin wuqūýī*. So the argument ***was*** all along about *imkān dhātī* – but Gangohī's fatwā took it even further into the existential realm. These terms are explained below and color coded to help readers uninitiated in *kalām* to avoid confusion; and to make it easy for beginners to identify the terms quickly.[405]

- **wajib dhati:** intrinsically necessary to exist
- **wajib aradi:** contingently necessary – intrinsically mumkin but becomes wajib due to an external factor
- **mustahil dhati:** intrinsically impossible to exist
- **mustahil aradi:** contingently impossible – instrinsically mumkin but becomes mustahil due to an external factor
- **imkan dhati:** existence is intrinsically possible
- **imkan wuquyi:** possibility of occurrence – can NEVER become wajib or mustahil

Keller confuses basic kalām terms, but still has the temerity to pass a judgement on Alahazrat:

> Whether this mistranslation was due to Ahmad Reza Khan's honest misapprehension of Gangohi's position, or directly carrying into Arabic a similar Urdu phrase without understanding the resultant nuance in Arabic...

How many books has Keller written in Arabic or any subject on *kalām*?

> This mistaken construing of Gangohi's position in turn became the basis for Ahmad Reza's declaring that Gangohī was a kafir,

Where did Alahazrat rule Gangohī a kāfir for his belief in *imkān al-kadhib*? In which book or fatwā did Alahazrat rule Gangohī – or anyone for that matter – a kāfir for the belief of *imkān al-kadhib*? Remember Keller's holier-than-thou advice in the beginning of the article on hearsay evidence?

> Accepting hearsay evidence against people is forbidden by Allah Most High, who says, "O you who believe: when a corrupt person brings you news, verify it, lest you harm people out of ignorance and come to regret what you have done" (Qur'an 49:6).

Either Keller knowingly and deliberately makes these false accusations against Alahazrat, or he repeats mindlessly the lies he has received from someone else without checking or he dreams up these 'facts' riding on his high horse. Or perhaps:

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[403] which is absurd because contingent itself means that its existence is dependent, and is neither necessary nor impossible.

[404] that is *wājib li ghayrih* or *mumtaniý li ghayrih* are caused due to an external factor.

[405] Color coding is only to denote the terms; there is no undertone.

> …but rather Allah calls such a person corrupt in the above verse "to repel and shock people from jumping to conclusions without checking" (*al-Futuhat al-ilahiyya, 4.178*).

If only Keller had heeded his own advice, it would perhaps prevent him from saying:

> …and giving the tragic fatwa that all who did not consider Gangohi to be a *kafir* themselves became *kafir*. Muslims can rest easy about this fatwa because it is simply mistaken.

Which fatwā is he talking about? The one mentioned in *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*? Did Keller even read it? Suppose, for the sake of argument, Alahazrat was mistaken – were all those scholars writing lengthy attestations also mistaken? Did they make basic inquiries to ascertain facts or blindly attested the takfīr of a number of people? Perhaps Alahazrat had bewitched them; or it did it not occur to them that Alahazrat might have 'misunderstood' the concept of '*jawaz áqlī*' which Keller has so clearly understood even without reading any of Alahazrat's books? Suppose Arab scholars trusted Alahazrat and wrote attestations based on his Arabic translation; where were the migrant scholars from India, who were trusted and respected in Makkah? Why did they not make the observation that Alahazrat had misunderstood the issue in his translation of the 'nuance'? Why did Khalīl Aĥmad or his associates not challenge him though he was present in Makkah at that time? Perhaps Alahazrat bribed them all and obtained their attestations as Khalīl Aĥmad Ambethwi says concerning the scholars of Ĥaramayn in his *Barāhīn*:

> …the beards of most of them is lesser than a fistful; they are careless in *şalāt*; and in spite of having the power to forbid people from evil, they do not even do it even for namesake. Most of them wear finger rings not permitted by the sharīáh; breaking ranks in prayer is widespread. Concerning fatāwā, give them something and get them to write anything you wish. If anybody informs them of their sins, they will rush to beat you up.[406]

Yet, Khalīl Aĥmad claims that the scholars of Ĥaramayn attested his *Muhannad*. Whether he bribed them to write in his favour, then becomes a moot point. Anyway, let us have a look at *some* of those simple-minded, scholars who were probably not as erudite as Keller, nor had the piety or sagacity to investigate and establish facts; or perhaps they were all corrupt as accused by Khalīl Ambethwi:

1. Shaykh Muĥammad Saýīd BāBuşayl [1245-1330 AH] the Chief Muftī of Shāfiýīs in Makkah
2. Shaykh Aĥmad Abu'l Khayr Mirdād [1293-1335 AH]
3. Shaykh Şāliĥ ibn Şiddīq Kamāl [1263-1332 AH] Muftī of Ĥanafīs in Makkah
4. Shaykh Ábd al-Ĥaqq Ilāhabādī [1252-1333 AH] famous Indian immigrant scholar
5. Shaykh Sayyid Ismāýīl Khalīl, Caretaker of the Meccan Library
6. Shaykh Sayyid Abū Ĥusayn Marzūqī [1284-1365 AH]
7. Shaykh Muĥammad Álī ibn Ĥusayn al-Māliki [1287-1367 AH]
8. Shaykh As'ád ibn Aĥmad al-Dahhān [1280-1341 AH]

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[406] *Barāhīn al-Qāţiáh*, p18. (p19 in another edition).

9. Shaykh Muĥammad Yūsuf al-Afghānī, teacher in the Sawlatiyyah School
10. Shaykh Sayyid Tājuddin Ilyās
11. Shaykh Khalīl al-Kharbūtī
12. Shaykh Ábbās ibn Sayyid Muĥammad Rađwān [1293-1346 AH]
13. Shaykh Úmar ibn Ĥamdān al-Maĥrasī [1292-1368 AH] who wrote TWO attestations
14. Shaykh Sayyid Aĥmad al-Barzanjī[407]
15. Shaykh Ábd al-Qādir Tawfīq Shalbī al-Tarabulsī

We will cite brief excerpts later, but notice that many of these scholars are famous names with towering reputations –Shaykh Úmar ibn Ĥamdān al-Maĥrisi who is the shaykh of Yāsīn Fādānī; or Shaykh Abū Ĥusayn al-Marzūqī, who was famously known as "Junior Abū Ĥanīfah" and who continued as the qāđī of Makkah well into the first decade of Saudi rule. These people: qāđīs, teachers and muftīs – were they all fooled by one man and in a state of stupor wrote eloquent attestations that explicitly approve of Alahazrat's fatwā? Shaykh Muĥammad Álī Ĥusayn al-Mālikī wrote a poem of 56 couplets praising Alahazrat, along with the attestation of the fatwā; but according to Keller, Alahazrat was misinformed, and those scholars attesting the fatwā were also not paying attention:

> ...based on inaccurate observation and inattention to needful logical distinctions that exculpate Gangohi from the charge of *kufr*

Alahazrat wrote a treatise of more than hundred pages, a classy work of kalām – *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ* – citing numerous sources. His mastery of kalām is evident from the fact that he was only thirty-five when he wrote that book; and he writes in its closing section:

> I seek Allāh's refuge. And a thousand times: ĥāshā lillāh! I certainly do not like to make takfīr of these people. Even until now, I still consider these followers[408] and modern claimants[409] as Muslims, even though there is no doubt in their heresy and waywardness. Neither do I issue the ruling of kufr upon the leader of their sect;[410] because our Prophet ﷺ has warned us from making takfīr of those who say: ***lā ilāha illā Allāh***. We do not rule them kāfir, as long as we do not possess proof as obvious and glaringly apparent as the mid-day sun; and [withhold from takfīr] until the remotest possibility remains to absolve them from kufr. Because Islām will certainly prevail and it cannot be subdued. Yet, I say: Indeed and undoubtedly, according to a group of scholars, the ruling of kufr is impending upon them due to numerous reasons.[411]

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[407] It should be noted that he differed with Alahazrat on some specific issues of *ílm al-ghayb*, and some of that was based on a mistaken premise and false information given to him by enemies. Alahazrat answered those slanders in his *Injā'a al-Barīy* and annotation *Ĥāsim al-Muftarīy*. This attestation is about the kufr-statements of Deobandis and there is no proof whatsoever that he withdrew this attestation.

[408] Followers of Ismāýīl Dihlawī; that is Gangohī, Ambethwī and other Deobandi followers.

[409] Modern claimants of the dead and buried Mútazilī belief of falsehood being included in Divine Power.

[410] Ismāýīl Dihlawī.

[411] *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ*, First Edition, p.80; See Appendix D for the exhibit.

Does Keller have to answer anyone on Judgement Day? It remains to be seen whether he will make any amends for such heinous slander or follow the Deobandi lead and brush it away as a fly upon his nose. Alahazrat reiterated his cautious stand on takfīr in his *Tamhīd e Īmān*:

> This humble servant of Allāh, may Allāh forgive him described this issue in considerable detail in the closing part of the book *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ* and there too, in just one issue of *imkān kazib*, in spite of demonstrating 78 reasons that necessitate disbelief [*luzūm e kufr*] I withheld from issuing the ruling of kufr.[412]

But I strain myself needlessly. Did Keller read *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*? Given below is the relevant portion of the fatwā:

> Among such folk are the Belying Wahābīs [*Wahābiyyah Kadh'dhabiyyah*] followers of Rashīd Aĥmad al-Gangohī; earlier he used to claim following in the footsteps of the kingpin of this group, Ismāýīl Dihlawī, that it is possible for Allāh táālā to lie [*imkān al-kadhib*] and I refuted his ravings in a separate book named *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ án Áybi Kadhib Maqbūĥ*, and sent it to him by registered post, and I received the acknowledgement. It is eleven years now[413] [and there is no reply yet]. For the first three years, they kept proclaiming that the refutation was being written, was already written, is already printed, is being sent to the printer…
>
> But Allāh táālā ***will not allow to succeed, the subterfuge of the treacherous; they could neither stand against it, nor could they defend***. And now, Allāh táālā has made him[414] blind and his sight is now lost, though his foresight was long lost. What hope remains for an answer now? Will a dead man come back from his grave to fight? He then spent his days – astray and in darkness; until in a fatwā he explicitly wrote: and I saw it with mine own eyes – in his own hand affixed with his own stamp, which has been published many times in Bombay along with its refutation. He said [in that fatwā] concerning a person who belied Allāh táālā, and claimed that He has uttered falsehood [*bi'l fiýl*] and clearly said that Allāh táālā has already uttered a lie; [Gangohī said:] "to not even deem such a person a transgressor [*fāsīq*] let alone consider him astray and leave alone that he has comitted kufr; many imāms have said what this person has said. However, utmost, he has comitted an error in interpretation."
>
> There is no God but Allāh; see the catastrophic repercussion of believing in *imkān al-kadhib* – it led him to the belief that factual occurrence of falsehood [in the speech of] Allāh…[415]

Alahazrat made takfīr for the fatwā of Gangohī in which he did not deem the belief 'Allāh táālā has already factually uttered a lie' as disbelief and advised that such a person is not even a fāsiq. See Appendix C for a scan and translation of the full fatwā. Only after Alahazrat saw this fatwā with his own eyes did he rule Gangohī kāfir. Where is takfīr on *imkān dhātī*, according to Keller's accusation and a 'nuance which Ahmed Reza Khan did not understand and directly carried over the Urdu phrase in Arabic'? It is amply clear from the citation from *Ĥusām* that Alahazrat did not make takfīr upon the erroneous position of falsehood being *imkān dhātī*, but rather upon Gangohī's fatwā of actual occurrence:

> …which in Arabic means the "factual possibility of [God's] lying" (*Husam al-Haramayn*)—a position that neither Rashid Ahmad Gangohī nor any other Muslim holds, for it is unbelief.

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[412] *Sall al-Suyūf al-Hindiyyah*, 1312 AH.

[413] Actually, this is an extract from his *Mustanad* which was written in 1320 AH and *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ* was first published in 1309 AH, hence the eleven years. Otherwise, it would be 16 years when attestations were sought in 1324 AH.

[414] Gangohī.

[415] *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*, p19-21.

According to Keller even believing in the "factual possibility" is unbelief or *kufr*; Alahazrat ruled Gangohī kāfir for the fatwā of "actual occurrence," as mentioned in the very text he ostentatiously quotes.

~

Istiftā'a

1. Zayd says: "When did I say that I do not believe in occurrence of falsehood in the speech of Allāh táālā?"
2. When Amr is informed of the above, he says: "Even though Zayd has committed a mistake in the interpretation of these verses, one should not call him a kāfir or a heretic or a misguided person.
3. Amr says that rescinding punishment is a special case of falsehood; and therefore, the meaning of occurrence of falsehood is thus valid [*wuqūú e kizb ke maánī durust hogaye*]

Does Zayd become a kāfir? Does Amr remain a Muslim even after stating the belief that **occurrence** [*wuqūú*] of falsehood in Divine Speech is valid?

~

If Keller thinks that Alahazrat's fatwā is still mistaken and that nobody ought to worry about it and it is a non-issue to believe that falsehood HAS indeed transpired in Divine Speech, we can only say: ***To Allāh we belong and towards Him is our return***.

> So while Ahmad Reza should be regarded as sincere in his convictions, in his own eyes defending the religion of Islam, and morally blameless, **he did get his facts wrong**...

The irony! But will Keller's followers heed his advice?

> ... he did get his facts wrong, and it is clearly inadmissible for Muslims to follow him in his mistake, even if made out of sincerity.

Keller is clueless about the facts of the issue; he did get his facts wrong, and it is clearly inadmissible for Muslims to follow him in his mistake.

~

6. Whether Allāh can create another like the Prophet (imkān al-nażīr)

It all started with Ismāýīl's book, *Tafwiyatu'l Īmān;* he claimed that Allāh táālā can create billions of Archangel Jibrīl and Muĥammad ﷺ in a single instant:

> The greatness of the King of kings is such that in one instant and by one command 'Be,' if He so wishes, He can create billions of prophets and saints and jinns and angels equal to Jibrīl and Muĥammad ﷺ.[416]

[416] *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān*, p31.

Sunni scholars objected to this and said that it is intrinsically impossible because Allāh táālā has already Willed that our Prophet ﷺ is the seal of prophets and has conveyed it in the Qur'ān; if He were to create another – let alone billions – it would mean that His Word is false; and because falsehood is intrinsically impossible for Him, creation of another prophet equal in all attributes to RasūlAllāh ﷺ is intrinsically impossible. Ismāýīl had only claimed that it was *possible* for exact duplicates of the Prophet to exist – he did not claim that they existed. Years later Amīr Ĥasan Sahswānī said that it is futile to argue about the mere possibility for a duplicate to exist, because there are six copies of the "Seal of Prophets" already in existence. To prove his point, a tradition of Ibn Ábbās was mentioned:

> …Seven earths;[417] and in each earth a prophet like your prophet; an Ādam like your Ādam; Nūĥ like your Nūĥ and Ibrāhīm like your Ibrāhīm[418]

Ibn Kathīr says that Bayhaqī and Ĥākim have validated the chain of narration as ṣaĥīĥ. We shall not delve into the validity of this report [*athar ibn Ábbās*] or its implications here, except that by common agreement, it cannot be taken literally as it would contradict established áqīdah and undermine a fundamental aspect of faith. This issue was hotly debated at that time and there were two main camps: Those who said that the ĥadīth is not only ṣaĥīĥ but takes the ruling of a marfūú ĥadīth;[419] others criticised the report and said that even if the chain is ṣaĥīĥ, it does not necessitate that the text is validated [matn is ṣaĥīĥ]; besides, some ĥadīth scholars have questioned its authenticity and some of them have said that it is probably from a Jewish tradition.

> All such [narrations] are rejected if they are not informed by the Infallible [Prophet ﷺ] or if there is no rigorously authenticated chain leading to him. Similar is the case of the report [*athar*][420] transmitted from Ibn Ábbās that he said: "In every earth there is creation similar to this earth; so much so that an Ādam like your Ādam, Ibrāhīm like your Ibrāhīm…" Ibn Jarīr mentioned this truncated, whereas Bayhaqī narrated it in full in *Asmā'a wa's Ṣifāt*. If it is proven that it is authentically reported from Ibn Ábbās ﷺ it will be explained that he must have taken it from Jewish tradition. Allāh táālā knows best.[421]

Amīr Ĥasan Sahswānī and Aĥsan Nānotwī[422] believed that there are six copies[423] of RasūlAllāh ﷺ, one in each of the six levels or six 'earths.' Qāsim Nānotwī took it even further and said that even if a prophet were to

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[417] Ibn Kathīr in both his tafsīr and *Bidāyah* mentions an opinion that the 'seven' earths refer to 'seven continents,' but he also refutes this opinion as it contradicts other reports.

[418] Cf, Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr, under the verse 65:12 of *Sūrah Ţalāq* vide Bayhaqī in *Asmā wa's Ṣifāt*, who said that the chain is ṣaĥīĥ.

[419] See *Qistās fī Mawāzinati Athar Ibn Ábbās*, written in 1295 AH by Shaykh Muĥammad Thānawī, a student of Shāh Is'ĥāq Dihlawī who refutes this view of multiple 'seals' or 'final prophets'. Even though in this same book, the author validates the belief that a duplicate of the Prophet ﷺ is intrinsically possible, but is impossible contingently. [*mumkin bi'dh dhāt, mumtaniý bi'l ghayr*] I have read major portions of the book, but I could not read it fully, as it is quite lengthy – 276 pages – and the writing is in old format and hence quite strenous to read. My objective of including this citation is only to prove that Alahazrat was not the lone critic of this áqīdah. The shaykh also mentions his good faith in Qāsim Nānotwī in the end finding it incredible that Nānotwī can believe in it. For those not well acquainted with Deobandis: This Thānawī is not the same as Ashraf Álī Thānawī.

[420] *Khabar* or *ĥadīth* is elevated [*raf'ú*] to RasūlAllāh ﷺ and athar is the saying of the companion when there is no indication in the wording that it is narrated from RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

[421] *Bidāyah wa'n Nihāyah*, 1/43. The *athar* is mentioned by Bayhaqī in *Asmā wa's Ṣifāt*, 389-390; Ĥākim in *Mustadrak*, 2/493; both said that the chain of narration is ṣaĥīĥ.

[422] Aĥsan Nānotwī's view was refuted in a fatwā by Alahazrat's father, Mawlānā Naqī Álī Khān, which caused Qāsim Nānotwī to write his *Taĥdhīr al-Nās* as mentioned in *Tanbīh al-Juhhāl* .

[423] *mithl* or example, similitude, similar entity etc.

appear after RasūlAllāh ﷺ, in this very earth it would not have any effect upon his being a final prophet. He openly professed belief in the literal meaning of the *athar*, and that anyone who disbelieved in it as a kāfir, according to the pamphlet *Munāzarah e Ahmadiyyah*.[424] When Sunni scholars refuted this ugly belief, Qāsim Nānotwī wrote a short book named *Taĥdhīr al-Nās* in which he claimed that the meaning of *khātam al-nabiyyin* is not "chronologically the last" as commonly understood. In this booklet, he makes strange claims and presents grotesque analogies; many scholars made takfīr upon this. Nānotwī says:

> ....Hypothetically, suppose a new prophet is born after the time of the Prophet ﷺ, even then there will be no effect on the 'finality' of the prophethood of our Master Muĥammad ﷺ; [comparatively] if there is [a prophet] among his contemporaries or in another earth; or it can be assumed even on this very earth, another prophet [after his ﷺ time without affecting his finality][425]

Deobandis try to cover this fact with fancy explanations and even outright denials, or their favourite trick of slandering Alahazrat – but Qāsim Nānotwī's *áqīdah* was well known in his time and is documented by many sources, including those who have no relation to Sunnis, such as Sir Syed Aĥmad Khān of Aligarh. This controversy reached the Noble Sanctuary and the Ĥanafī muftī, Ábd al-Raĥmān Sirāj refuted this in a lengthy fatwā which was attested by scholars of all the four schools and includes people of Indian origin such as Shaykh Raĥmatullāh Kairānwī; it was printed in Egypt by Ĥajj Mansour's publishing house in 38 pages in 1291 AH.[426] A debate between Qāsim Nānotwī and Shaykh Muĥammad Shāh was held in Delhi on the validity of the belief stated in *Taĥdhīr al-Nās*, and thereafter, both parties claimed victory. Shaykh Ábdu'l Ghafūr compiled the debate in the form of "Zayd says / Ámr says" and circulated it among scholars who attested it including Shaykh Ábdu'l Ĥayy Lucknawī who had initially supported Qāsim Nānotwī.[427] Deobandis accuse that Alahazrat strung together three different phrases to produce a novel meaning; whereas the whole book was written to prove existence of multiple 'seals' or 'final prophets'. The full name of the book is: ***Taĥdhīr al-Nās min Inkāri Athar Ibn Ábbās****: Warning to People from Rejecting the Narration of Ibn Ábbās.* It is obvious which *athar* the book is talking about and even the question mentions multiple 'seals'. This is the second background of the issue, which Keller probably does not even know let alone understand, but still writes with supreme confidence:

> The final issue, which can be analyzed according to similar considerations, is the question of whether Allah can create another like the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace). Though hypothetically possible (ja'iz 'aqli), for example, if Allah were to create a second universe precisely like ours in every particular; it is contingently and effectively impossible (mustahil 'aradi),

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[424] See the preface of *Tanbih al-Juhhāl*, which was written immediately after Qāsim Nānotwī's *Taĥdhīr al-Nās*.

[425] *Taĥdhīr al-Nās*, p33. See Appendix C for scanned images of these pages.

[426] *Taqdīs al-Wakīl*, p30-31. Incidentally Sir Syed Ahmed Khān of Aligarh [the Naturalist zindīq] mentioned this fatwā in his *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq*, p365 and even cited excerpts. Of course, Sir Syed cites this for his own nefarious purpose to invalidate tafsirs, but my point is about the historical fact that a fatwā of Shaykh Ábd al-Raĥmān Siraj was printed as claimed in *Taqdīs al-Wakīl*. Shaykh Muĥammad Thānawī also mentioned it in *Qistās*.

[427] He has written a short booklet *Dāfiý al-Waswās án Athari Ibn Ábbās*, also mentioned in *Qistās*. Ashraf Álī Thānawī has also acknowledged this in *Ifāđāt al-Yawmiyyah* 5/239: "When *Taĥdhīr al-Nās* was written, nobody in India supported Mawlānā [Qāsim Nānotwī] except Mawlānā Ábd al-Ĥayy [Lucknawī]".

Did Keller consider that Ismāýīl has said that Allāh can create billions of Muĥammad in one instant; and his Deobandi followers – Gangohī deems this belief as essence of faith: *áyn islām*. And while he rambles on, let him learn a few facts, because they add a lot of value to preaching:

> …the Seal of the Prophets, whom Allah has determined that there shall be no prophet (nabi) after, or any prophetic messenger (rasul)

Some Deobandi/Wahābī leaders believed that there were six additional 'seals' present already in the six levels or six earths, vide the tradition of Ibn Ábbās. Qāsim Nānotwī was the champion of that tradition and even wrote a book warning people against rejecting it.

> …where the word khatim or "seal" in Arabic, when annexed (mudaf) to a series, as in the expression "Seal of the Prophets," can only mean the final member of that series through which it is complete and after which nothing may be added. This is the only possible lexical sense of the word in the context.

Tut, tut. Nānotwī thinks that it is a layman's understanding – which means Keller is a layman who has no proper understanding of serious religious matters. Don't shoot the messenger, either first learn the meaning of 'seal' properly or take your complaint to Nānotwī who says:

> Firstly, one should learn about the meaning of [the phrase] *Seal of Prophets* so that it may not pose difficulty in comprehending the answer. Common folk [or laymen] think that RasūlAllāh ﷺ being 'Seal' means that the age [of his advent] comes later than all other prophets and he is chronologically the last prophet; but people of understanding are aware that there is no superiority in chronologically being prior or later.[428]

I do not think that Keller will dare to teach Nānotwī the basics of the language; nor will he deem it necessary to investigate whether Deobandis know what they are babbling about. All his scorn is reserved for Sunnis and Alahazrat in particular, who is fair game.

> Here, as in the preceding question, both Barelwis and Deobandis agree about the actual result—that no one like the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) shall ever be created again

But what about Ismāýīl's claim and Nānotwī's assertion? Or will Keller teach Urdu to all those scholars from Delhi, Lucknow, Rampur, Badayun and Bareilly who deemed it kufr, because they did not understand the following phrase and its context as well as Keller does:

> The greatness of the King of kings is such that in one instant and by one command 'Be,' if He so wishes, He can create billions of prophets and saints and jinns and angels equal to Jibrīl and Muĥammad ﷺ.[429]

> For even though the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) is merely a contingent and created human being, whom it is hypothetically possible (ja'iz 'aqli) that Allah could create others exactly like, it is contingently impossible (mustahil 'aradi) that Allah should do so…

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[428] *Taĥdhīr al-Nās.*

[429] *Tafwiyatu'l Īmān*, p31.

As I have said it many times earlier, Keller does not have any knowledge of the debate in the subcontinent, nor knowledge of kalām to understand the issue – the most comprehensive work on this subject is that of Faḍl al-Ĥaqq Khayrābādī titled *Imtināá al-Nażīr*; but before Keller attempts to teach kalām, logic or 'nuances' of Arabic language to Mawlānā Faḍl al-Ĥaqq, let him know that even his enemies acknowledged Faḍl al-Ĥaqq's command of these sciences.[430] If Keller insists, let him write a refutation of the two works: *Imtināá al-Nażīr* and *Ibṭāl al-Taghwā*. For anybody else, that would require an ability to read Persian; but Keller can manage a refutation even without reading it. Or he can dismiss it as 'simply mistaken' without bothering to prove his claim.

> And a duplicate of the Prophet Muhammad (Allah bless him and give him peace) who was like him in everything except prophethood would not in any meaningful sense be "like" him at all.

Poor soul! He should first learn about the position of the people he defends. Qāsim Nānotwī insists that:

> Hypothetically, suppose a new prophet is born after the time of the Prophet ﷺ, even then there will be no effect on the 'finality' of the prophethood of our Master Muĥammad ﷺ; [comparatively] if there is [a prophet] among his contemporaries or in another earth; or it can be assumed even on this very earth, another prophet [after his ﷺ time without affecting his finality].

> So those who say, as did some of the Deobandis, that Allah's creating a "like" is hypothetically possible, [22] are correct, in the very limited sense that it is logically within Allah's almighty power to do so—had He not already

The reference in Keller's quote is from Ismāýīl's *Tafwiyat* mentioned earlier and scholars have written lengthy refutations of this utterly burnable book; apparently, none of them understood the meaning better than Keller. Not even people like Shaykh Aĥmad Saýīd Naqshbandī Dihlawī,[431] who approved of Mawlānā Faḍl al-Ĥaqq's fatāwā and also wrote attestation to Mawlānā Faḍl al-Rasūl Badāyūnī's *Mútaqad al-Muntaqad*.

Perhaps they did not understand Urdu well, or perhaps, Swahili or Koro was their mother tongue.

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The argument made by Sunni scholars[432] was:

1. Allāh táālā is free from all flaws; it is intrinsically impossible [*muĥāl dhātī*] for Allāh táālā to have a fault or a flaw.
2. Falsehood is a flaw.
3. Therefore it is intrinsically impossible [*muĥāl dhātī*] for Allāh táālā to lie.
4. If Allāh táālā would create another prophet exactly and in ALL attributes perfectly similar to our Prophet ﷺ, it would necessitate that Allāh táālā has uttered a lie –

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[430] *Nuz'hatu'l Khawāṭir*, #687, 8/1063.

[431] Who descends from the family of the Mujaddid at the dawn of the Second Millenium, Imām Rabbānī Aĥmed al-Sirhindī and who was praised by Ĥājī Imdādullāh Muhājir Makkī, Gangohī's shaykh as a waliy.

[432] See the fatwā of Alahazrat which is cited later; *Fatāwā Ridawiyyah*, 29/221.

5. Because He has informed us that RasūlAllāh ﷺ is the last prophet; as He has said: "***Rather, he is the Messenger of Allāh and the Seal of Prophets***"[433]
6. We believe that it is intrinsically impossible [*muĥāl dhātī*] for Allāh to lie
7. Therefore, it is intrinsically impossible [*muĥāl dhātī*] for an exact replica [*nażīr*] equal in all attributes of the Prophet ﷺ to exist.
8. Superficially, it would appear to people with shallow knowledge as if this claim constrains the Power of Allāh táālā – as if *máādhAllāh* – He cannot create another if He wishes to.
9. But it is clear for people of knowledge, that it relates to His Will and Knowledge – He Willed in pre-eternity that our Master Muĥammad ﷺ shall be the Seal of Prophets and the final prophet and that His prophethood is all-encompassing.
10. He conveyed His Will by His Divine Speech.
11. If He contradicts this, it would necessitate that He did not know that He would change His Will; which would necessitate ignorance – Exalted is He from such things.
12. Or if He knew that He would change His Will, informing us that RasūlAllāh ﷺ is the Seal of all prophets would mean that He has uttered a lie – Exalted is He from such things.
13. It is intrinsically impossible for Him to be attributed with ignorance or falsehood.
14. Therefore, it is intrinsically impossible [*muĥāl dhātī*] for an exact replica [*nażīr*] equal in all attributes of the Prophet ﷺ to exist.

In any case, it is plain from the logical distinction just described that here too, the disagreement between Barelwis and Deobandis is about something that does not affect the kufr or iman of either, and that those who say otherwise are simply mistaken

We do not know about Keller's Deobandi buddies, but we would like to know which Sunni scholar has made takfīr of anyone for the above six issues – unless any of them denies or negates a fundamental aspect of religion; such as, for example, the belief that the finality of the Prophet ﷺ does not mean chronological, or that finality will not be affected by the advent of a new prophet even on this earth. Qāđī Íyāđ has said:

> …every one of them is a kāfir and has belied the Prophet ﷺ, because he has informed us that he is "**the final prophet and there is no prophet after him**". He ﷺ has also informed us narrating from Revelation that he is the final prophet and that he is sent for all of mankind. The entire nation has unanimously agreed [*ijmāá*] that these statements[434] are literal and thus it should be understood [literally] without any metaphorical explanation or exception. Obviously, there is no doubt in the kufr of all the aforementioned groups; absolutely, by ijmāá and by revealed proofs.[435]

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[433] Sūrah Aĥzāb, 33:40.

[434] Statements in the Qur'ān and Ĥadīth that proclaim RasūlAllāh ﷺ as *Khātam al-Nabiyyīn*.

[435] *Shifā,* p393.

Similarly, if someone denies that the Prophet ﷺ had absolutely no knowledge of unseen, is a kāfir. Or if one does not make takfīr of a person who considers someone Muslim even after he states his belief that Allāh táālā has uttered a lie.

> Rather, all of the main 'aqida-related issues the Barelwis and Deobandis disagree about can be legitimately debated and differed upon by Muslims without either side having left Islam.

There goes another strawman on a pyre. From the 'six' they become 'all'. Even though Keller's ignorance is glaringly apparent in the six issues above, he sweeps everything off the table: 'ALL of the main áqīdah-related issues,' he says.

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A murid of Ashraf Álī Thānawī narrates his tale in which he recites the testimony of faith erroneously in his dream; and then he wakes up and tries to correct the mistake by reciting the blessing on the Prophet ﷺ, but his tongue is unable to utter the Prophet's ﷺ name and he keeps saying: *allahumma şalli álā sayyidinā wa mawlānā ashraf áli*. The poor disciple in his consternation writes to Ashraf Álī asking what he should do and Ashraf Álī consoles him: "There is comfort in this incident that your shaykh[436] is a diligent follower of the Prophet."[437]

Ismāýīl Dihlawī said that it is heresy to believe that Allāh táālā is free from modality:

> ...that is transcendence of [Allāh] the Exalted from time, place, direction, modality, rational composition; and discussion of Attributes being the same [as Essence] or additional; or to prove that Allāh táālā can be seen without direction or boundaries; or the existence of individual-indivisible particle [*jawhar al-fard*] or the non-existence of prime-matter or hyle [*hayūlā*] and forms and nature and thought or vice-versa; or debate about destiny; or discuss that it was necessary for the world to exist, or prove that the universe exists from eternity or such things from discussions of rational theology [*kalām*] or philosophical theology are all inherently heretical beliefs if anybody professes the aforementioned beliefs and considers them as part of religious beliefs[438]

He says in *Sirāţ Mustaqīm*:

> One day, [Allāh] The Exalted, The Glorified held his [Sayyid Aĥmad Barelwi] right hand in His Own Powerful Hand and gave him a lofty and incredible divine thing in his hand and said: "We have given you this and We shall give you more"[439]

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[436] meaning Ashraf Álī himself.

[437] The published magazine *Al-Imdād*, Safar 1336 AH.

[438] *Yīđāĥ al-Ĥaqq*, p35-36.

[439] *Şirāţ e Mustaqīm*, p175.

Ismāýīl Dihlawī says deploring *taqlīd*:

> Whoever gives preference to the saying of any imām or mujtahid [scholar] over the saying of the Messenger; and takes their saying as proof in comparison to ĥadīth – substantiates polytheism.[440]

In another work, he says this even more explicitly:

> Alack! How can I know that it is permissible to strictly follow [taqlīd] of a specific person when it is possible to find narrations reported from the Prophet ﷺ which are clear and explicit proof against the opinion of the imām [of a specific madh'hab]. If one does not leave the opinion of his imām [in such a case], there is a shadow of polytheism [in such an act of taqlīd].[441]

[440] *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān*, p42. Yet Deobandis vehemently deny that Ismāýīl was a la-madh'habi and the foremost, if not the first to advocate that everybody should derive rulings from the Qur'ān and Ĥadīth themselves; nobody cites imām or mujtahid's statement opposed to ĥadīth and Qur'ān; what appears as 'opposed' to ĥadīth is a matter of ijtihād, where the ĥadīth is deemed as superseded due to other ĥadīth or technical issues with that evidence such as abrogation or figurative meanings etc. – otherwise Deobandis should declare every person who misses an obligatory prayer as kāfir – explicitly said in the ĥadīth.

[441] *Tanwīr al-Áynayn*.

VI. THE APOLOGIST

Two men went to a qāđī; the first claimed that the other owed him twenty four silver coins, which the second man acknowledged. When the qāđī ordered the second man to pay the dues, he said: "May Allāh make the qāđī more righteous. Sir, I have a donkey and I earn four silvers every day – I spent one on the donkey, I kept one for myself and two for this man until I had collected the payable amount – but this man disappeared and I used that money. If the qāđī can retain this man for twelve days, I will collect the twenty four silvers due and repay him."

The qāđī imprisoned the first man until the second had collected the payable amount.[442]

When I read the article for the first time, I thought that it was influenced by Deobandi apologia; upon re-reading it, I realised that the article is meant to be a Deobandi apology in its entirety; Keller even invents rules to favour Deobandi positions. In spite of utter ignorance of the issue and general cluelessness, he dismisses everything with one stroke, discussed in the previous chapter; everything, except one pesky issue:

> only one issue remains that offers either side a pretext for takfir; namely, whether some words written by Deobandi scholars constitute insulting the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) or not

Why should anyone do takfīr of sunnis for the blasphemous words written by Deobandi scholars? Why the 'either'? But first, let us go back a few pages and to inspect the framework weaved by Keller:

> Only when the intention entails kufr do such words take the speaker out of Islam. Context is of the utmost importance in determining this intention, and taking someone's words out of context is universally considered dishonest, doing violence to their intended meaning

The above ruling is made about ambiguous passages but cannot be allowed for blasphemy as mentioned by Haytami; Keller uses this rule for Deobandi statements to prove that they can be interpreted favourably despite being explicit in their insult – because of his 'intention' rule:

> The need to **contextualize words to establish their intent** is even more imperative in possible utterances of kufr that insult Allah Most High or the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace). Something might be said that while outwardly offensive to Allah or His messenger (Allah bless him and give him peace), was nevertheless intended by the speaker to make a valid point, not as an insult.

Keller is trying to tell you that the Deobandi statements were intended to make valid points and not as insult; by the Kellerian rule, that would absolve Deobandis – so he brings up 'context' again:

> "The Imputed Insult," to the remarks of **these two scholars in context**, and show how Imam Subki's distinction between intentional and unintentional offense offers a compelling Islamic legal solution to a debate that has become a social problem.

[442] *Akhbār al-Ĥamqā wa'l Mughaffalīn*, Chapter 13: Simpleton Qāđīs, p110.

The following statement removes any lingering doubts that Deobandi apology is his main agenda:

> To understand what was said, and what was meant, **one has to look at the context**, which was various Deobandi scholars' rebuttals of Ahmad Reza Khan's belief in the Prophet's (Allah bless him and give him peace) incomparably vast knowledge of the unseen.

In other words:

1. The two scholars – Ashraf Álī and Khalīl Aĥmad – said something outwardly offensive to Allāh's messenger ﷺ
2. This was said to make a valid point, not as an insult;
3. Imām Subkī (according to Keller) said that when insult is not intended, it is not kufr;
4. Therefore the two scholars are not kāfir and Ahmad Reza Khan's takfīr is erroneous which has become a social problem.

The patent folly in this logic can be cross-checked with any competent muftī; proforma of a fatwā request is included in the concluding chapter. Shown below is the chronology as imagined by Keller:

	Chronology According to Keller	Keller's Statements
1	Ahmed Reza Khan made claims about knowledge of unseen – his "exotic prophetology"	one has to look at the context, which was various Deobandi scholars' rebuttals of Ahmad Reza Khan's belief in the Prophet's (Allah bless him and give him peace) incomparably vast knowledge of the unseen.
2	Deobandi scholars misunderstood it and refuted it	Certain Deobandi ulema felt that Ahmad Reza Khan wanted to say that the Prophet's (Allah bless him and give him peace) knowledge went beyond the relative unseen
3	Ahmed Reza Khan's utterances were the reason for the harsh passages written by Deobandi scholars	Before presenting what they said in detail, let us cast a glance at Ahmad Reza Khan's prophetology. What were their utterances an answer to?
4	Insulting passages of Deobandi ulema were a response to Ahmed Reza Khan's *Dawlah al-Makkiyyah*	Despite such unambiguous words, certain Deobandi ulema made rebuttals of what they viewed as the grave innovation of confusing the extent of the Prophet's knowledge (Allah bless him and give him peace)

5	Khalīl Aĥmad wrote *Barāhīn al-Qaţiáh* to refute Ahmed Reza Khan	Thus the Deobandi scholar Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri wrote in his *al-Barahin al-qati'a*
6	Khalīl Aĥmad's comparison of Satan and Angel of Death in *Barāhīn* was a refutation of Ahmed Reza Khan	That Ahmad Reza's proof of the vastness of the Prophet's knowledge (Allah bless him and give him peace) is based on a false analogy between the Prophet's merit (fadl) and his knowledge;
7	Thānawi wrote *Ĥifż al-Īmān* refuting Ahmed Reza Khan	Aside from Thanwi's artless comparison of the highest of creation with the lowest, the very point of saying it in refutation of Reza is not plain, in view of the latter's explicit acknowledgement that no one can equal Allah's knowledge or possess it independently… (*al-Dawla al-Makkiyya*)
8	Ahmed Reza Khan wrote *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn* refuting the above	At the latter words, the fiery pen of Ahmad Reza Khan wrote his *Husam al-Haramayn*

People who are informed of the dispute can easily tell that Keller's chronology of events is utter nonsense – which is also apparent from the timeline shown earlier. Here are the facts once again:

1. A Sunni scholar Mawlānā Ábd al-Samīý wrote *Anwār al-Sāţiáh* in **1302/1884**, proving the validity of *mawlid* and *fātiĥah*, which were being scorned by mainly Ismāýīl's followers.
2. Khalīl Aĥmad wrote its refutation in **1304/1886** named *Barāhīn al-Qaţiáh álā Żalāmi al-Anwār al-Sāţiáh*, in which the offensive passage is mentioned.
3. In **1307/1889** Alahazrat received a query concerning a statement from the book about *imkān al-kadhib* which he refuted in *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ*, but as he was not aware[443] of the blasphemous passage at that time, he had not made any takfīr of Khalīl Aĥmad in that book.
4. In **1319/1901** Ashraf Álī Thānawī writes *Ĥifż al-Īmān* which contains the blasphemous passage.
5. In **1320/1902** Alahazrat publishes *Mútaqad al-Muntaqad*[444] with his own commentary named *Mustanad al-Mútamad*; in the closing section of the book, takfīr of Deobandis is mentioned.

[443] The attestation in the second edition of *Anwār e Sāţiáh* is for the previous edition of the book.

[444] Written by an earlier scholar, Mawlānā Fađl al-Rasūl Badāyūnī.

6. In **1323/1905** Alahazrat goes for his second Ĥajj and his fatwā from *Mustanad* is presented to scholars in the Ĥaramayn who attest the fatwā as sound and valid. Khalīl Aĥmad is also present in Ĥaramayn that year, but he does not make any effort to refute Alahazrat.

7. In **1324/1906** Alahazrat writes *Dawlatu'l Makkiyyah*, which Keller seems to think is the source of the conflict.

8. The extracted fatwā from *Mustanad* along with attestations is published as *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn* in **1325/1907** after Alahazrat returns from Ĥajj.

Pointing out such factual errors is becoming tiresome and frankly, the repetition is embarrassing for us, but it is unavoidable:

> To understand what was said, and what was meant, one has to look at the context, which was various Deobandi scholars' rebuttals of Ahmad Reza Khan's belief

One has to look at the context – and the history as explained earlier; not fantasies and fairy tales. Arguably, the first person in the subcontinent to ignite the controversy concerning the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ was Ismāýīl Dihlawī, whose mischief preceded the school of Deoband by forty-three years; and Ismāýīl died thirty years prior to the birth of Alahazrat. The founders of Deoband school supported Ismāýīl's Wahābī beliefs – whereas Alahazrat defended the Sunni positions and refuted Wahābīs.

> This seemed to the Deobandis to blur the distinction between Allah's knowledge and human knowledge; or more specifically, between the knowledge of the *absolute* unseen and the *relative* unseen.

Once again, due to ignorance or artifice, Keller tries to portray the issue as a squabble of terms. The main issue is that Deobandis claim that knowledge of unseen is polytheism - Ismāýīl wrote:

> Umm Álā'a narrates that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: I swear by Allāh I do not know; again, I swear by Allāh that I do not know – even though I am the Messenger of Allāh; what will happen[445] to me or to you.
>
> **Insight:**[446] That is whatever Allāh táālā will do to his slaves – whether in this world or in the grave or in the hereafter – thus, nobody knows its reality: no prophet, no saint; neither do they know their own state, nor that of others...

Khalīl in his *Barāhīn* with Gangohī's attestation:

> The Pride of the world has himself said: "By Allāh, I do not know what will be done to me, nor to you..."(*ĥadīth)* Shaykh Ábd al-Haq narrates that [RasūlAllāh ﷺ said:] "I do not have knowledge of what is behind the wall"[447]

Khalīl Aĥmad lied through his teeth in his above attribution to Shaykh Ábd al-Ĥaqq concerning the report: "I do not have knowledge of what is behind this wall," by omitting the second half of the statement. The shaykh has actually said in *Madārij al-Nubuwwah*:

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[445] Literal translation from Ismāýīl's Urdu: "How will I be treated nor how you will [be treated]".

[446] The letter ***fā*** is for *fāyidah* meaning: the lesson we learn from the ĥadīth just quoted. *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān*, p27.

[447] *Barāhīn*, p46.

> At this juncture, some people raise an objection that there is a report that RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "I am a slave and I do not know what is behind this wall." The answer to this objection is **that the statement has no basis and the report is not authentic**.[448]

Ibn Ĥajar al-Ásqalānī says that the "report is baseless,"[449] and Ibn Ĥajar al-Makki in *Afđal al-Qirā* says: "its chain of transmission is unknown."[450] Look at the darkness in the hearts of these people – they bring baseless and inauthentic ĥadīth to deny the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ but are reluctant to accept the mountain of evidence from the Qur'ān and şaĥīĥ ĥadīth for the expanse of his knowledge. Concerning the ĥadīth quoted by Ismāýīl from *Mishkāt*, and repeated by Khalīl, Álī al-Qārī says in his commentary:

> Tūrpushtī has said: It is not permissible to explain this ĥadīth or other such reports to mean that the Prophet ﷺ was indecisive concerning his fate or was unsure of his final state near Allāh táālā; because there are şaĥīĥ ĥadīth which are conclusive in their proof against anything reported to the contrary. How can they be explained in such manner when he ﷺ has [himself] informed us reporting from Allāh táālā that He shall make him ﷺ attain the Extolled Station; and that he ﷺ is the most honourable, most beloved to Allāh táālā in the creation; and he ﷺ will be the first to intercede and the first whose intercession will be accepted; etc.[451]

Concerning the Qur'ānic verse:

وَمَآ أَدۡرِي مَا يُفۡعَلُ بِي وَلَا بِكُمۡۖ

I do not know what will be done to me, nor to you[452]

The *jahl-murakkab* is apparent of those who claim that RasūlAllāh ﷺ is unaware of his own fate. When this verse was revealed, the polytheists, the Jews and hypocrites became very happy and said: "How can we follow a prophet who does not know what will happen to him or to us? Verily, he has no superiority upon us" Clearly, it is the practice of polytheists and hypocrites[453] to say that RasūlAllāh ﷺ is unaware of what will happen to him; which Ismāýīl smugly asserted in his *Tafwiyat* and Gangohī applauded and commended the author and the book as fully concordant with the Qur'ān and sunnah.

Exegetes have clarified that when this verse was revealed, and the infidels rejoiced, many verses were subsequently revealed describing what will happen to RasūlAllāh ﷺ, and what will happen to both Muslims and kāfirs. Some scholars have said that it means "what will happen to me in this world" that is "whether I will pass away like previous prophets or whether I will be martyred like some others" and everyone agrees that this does not mean "what will happen to me in the hereafter." Some scholars say that it is abrogated by the verse from Sūrah al-Fatĥ, and some others disagreed saying that it only contains information – and information cannot be abrogated. According to them it means that no one can obtain this information by perception or imagination – *idrāk* – but in no way contradicts that Allāh táālā has informed him and he has the knowledge.

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[448] *Madārij al-Nubuwwah*, 1/7.

[449] Cf. *Mawāhib Laduniyyah* 2/13, *Maqāşid al-Ĥasanah* #934, *Kashf al-Khafā* of Ájlūnī, 2/175: #2175.

[450] *Afđal al-Qirā li Qurrā'yi Umm al-Qurā* aka *Minaĥ al-Makkiyyah* p271 under the explanation of verse #125: ***istawába akhbār al-fađli minhu'btidā'u:*** "its chain of transmission is unknown. Ibn al-Jawzi mentioned it without isnād in one of his books".

[451] *Mirqāt al-Mafātīĥ*, 9/521, #5340.

[452] Sūrah Al-Aĥqāf, 46:9. *mā* can be used either as interrogative or a negator.

[453] Which is inanely repeated by hypocrites of our age.

Imām Ĥasan al-Baṣrī said: "...that he does not know of his station in the hereafter? We seek Allāh's refuge! He knows that he is in paradise from that time the Covenant was taken from the prophets."[454] The following verses clearly describe the lofty rank of RasūlAllāh ﷺ:

لِّيَغْفِرَ لَكَ ٱللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِن ذَنۢبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ

So that Allāh may forgive for your sake, the sins of those past and those in the future[455]

وَلَلْـَٔاخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ مِنَ ٱلْأُولَىٰ

Verily, the hereafter is better for you than the present[456]

عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُودًا

It is nigh that your Lord shall raise you to the Extolled Station[457]

The absolute unseen (*al-ghayb al-mutlaq*) is that which no one knows but Allah, such as when the Final Hour will come, or the knowledge of every particular of being, unobscured by limitations of past or future, this world or the next, time or space, or the other cognitive categories that limit and structure human perception of reality.

Keller's description is tailored to omit details that may contradict his argument. Alahazrat has said that knowledge can be classified either by source or by pertinence. By source, it is either intrinsic or bestowed; by pertinence, it is either absolute knowledge or categorical knowledge which are further sub-categorised as:

- absolute knowledge comprehensive and complete in every detail such that nothing is excluded
- absolute knowledge but generic
- categorical knowledge – in detail
- categorical knowledge – in general

The relative unseen (*al-ghayb al-nisbi*) is a fact of everyday life, and is merely that each individual knows things others are unaware of, hence "unseen" in relation to them.

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[454] *Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*, verse 46:9.

[455] Sūrah Fat'Ĥ, 48:2.

Áṭā'a al-Khurāsānī said {**sins of yours past**} that is, mistakes of your parents Ādam and Ĥawwā'a {**and those after**} sins of your followers. [*Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*]. Even though Shawkānī rejects this as a far-fetched explanation, he insists that the 'sin' mentioned is not a sin but an action superseding a better one [*tark al-awlā*] but not a sin for anybody else. In *Baĥr al-Úlūm* of Samarqandī: {**Allāh may forgive those sins of yours past**} that is, the mistake of Ādam {**and those after**} that is, the sins of your followers. Imām Baghawī in *Máālim al-Tanzīl*: {**those sins of yours past**} that is, the mistakes of your parents Ādam and Ĥawwā'a [forgiven] because of your munificence [*bi barakatika*] {**and those after**} the sins of your followers, because of your prayers. So also in *Tafsīr of Ibn Áṭiyyah* [d.546] *Tafsīr Khāzin* [d.725] and many other tafsirs. Imām Áṭā'a ibn Abi Muslim [50-135] is a junior *tābiýī* and Yaĥyā'a ibn Maýīn said that he was trustworthy [*thiqah*] even though Ibn Ĥibbān said that he had a bad memory. [*Tahdhīb al-Kamāl,* Mizzī, #3941; *Ṭabaqāt al-Ĥuffāż*, Suyūṭī, #130 in the Fourth Rank] Among those who narrate from him are the imāms Abū Ĥanīfah, Mālik, Thawrī, Shúbah and Ĥammād ibn Salamah; his narrations are found in *Ṣaĥīĥ Muslim* and the four *sunan* [*Tahdhīb* of Ibn Ĥajar, #394].

[456] Sūrah Đuĥā, 93:4.

[457] Sūrah Isrā'a, 17:79.

Keller's classification is intended to favourably explain the blasphemous passage of *Ĥifż al-Īmān* – because this is exactly what Thānawī has also said: everybody knows something or the other which is hidden from others, and similar is the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ, so what is extraordinary about it?[458] As such, ghayb is relative to us – the creation – because nothing is hidden from Allāh táālā; His knowledge is absolute – *ílm al-muţlaq* – and the verses that mention knowledge of unseen simply means that it is unseen by the creation.

Alahazrat's Categorisation of Knowledge in *Al-Dawlatu'l Makkiyah*

I. BY SOURCE: *maşdar*		
1	***Dhātī*** Self, Own	Knowledge that is one's own and not granted by another or gained by any other external entity – this kind of knowledge is only the Divine Knowledge of Allāh táālā and if anybody else claims even a speck of knowledge, howsoever infinitesimal, by self and without Allāh's grant is undoubtedly a kāfir.
2	***Áţāyī*** Bestowed, Given	Knowledge granted by Allāh táālā; this is specific to creation and if anybody claims even a speck of such knowledge for Allāh táālā is a kāfir and polytheist – because it would mean that Allāh táālā has received knowledge from others, *al-íyādhu billāh*.
II. BY PERTINENCE: *muta-állaq*		
1	***Ílm al-Muţlaq*** Absolute Knowledge	The principle of universal generalisation [*adāt al-úmūm wa'l istighrāq*]; that absence of a single component negates the existence of this kind of knowledge; the rule here is *mūjibah kulliyyah, sālibah juzyiyyah*. Such as "all swans are white" is disproved by the existence of a single black swan.
2	***Muţlaq al-Ílm*** Knowledge (Absolutely)	***Muţlaq*** is used here as described by the scholars of *uşūl*: That is, any component is sufficient to affirm knowledge, but it requires proof of absence of every component to prove that it does not exist [*mūjibah juzyiyyah, sālibah kulliyah*].

[458] *al-íyādhu billāh;* this is Thānawī's comment paraphrased.

	1a	***Ílm al-Muţlaq al-Tafşīlī*** Absolute Knowledge: Comprehensive, Total	All-encompassing, entire, perfect, infinite, conclusive, precise, factual and unlimited which includes everything completely, and every detail recursively. This belongs only to Allāh; it is impossible for anyone in the creation to encompass the knowledge of Allāh; rather the comparison of the knowledge of everything and everyone in the creation to the knowledge of Allāh is like that of a millionth of a drop of water to that of million oceans, but even lesser – because millions of oceans are finite and the knowledge of Allāh táālā is infinite.
	1b	***Ílm al-Muţlaq al-Ijmālī*** Absolute Knowledge: Generic	Generic Absolute Knowledge such as "***Allāh táālā is the Knower of all things.***" We know this in general, but we do not know every detail. Every Muslim has this knowledge and if anyone denies this, he becomes a kāfir.
	2a	***Muţlaq al-Ílm al-Tafşīlī*** Knowledge (absolutely) in detail	In the case of knowledge (absolutely) of unseen, things like paradise, hell, Judgement Day etc are known categorically. These are all unseen, and knowledge about them is given to even common Muslims – as the verse says: "***They bear faith in the unseen.***"[459]
	2b	***Muţlaq al-Ílm al-Ijmālī*** Knowledge (absolutely) in general	Knowledge (absolutely) in general

Alahazrat's classification is not specific to knowledge of the unseen, but nevertheless it is explained adequately within the above categorisation. He did not specify 'unseen' because, as we have said, it is unseen in relation to us – and not for Allāh táālā, and His Knowledge is *ílm al-muţlaq*.

لو بدا الغيب لعين لم يكن ◈ ذاك غيبا إنه قد شهدا

فجميع الكون مشهود له ◈ ما لديه غائب ما وجدا

If the unseen was apparent to the eye – that would not be unseen anymore as it was witnessed

The entire creation is witnessed by Him – nothing that exists can be unseen for Him[460]

[459] Imām Rāzī in his tafsīr has said: "It is not forbidden for us to say that we have knowledge of unseen upon which, we do not have any perceptible evidence.."

[460] *Futuĥāt al-Makkiyyah*, chapter 492, 7/189.

Mawlānā Muĥammad Jaáfar al-Kattānī in his book *Jalā'a al-Qulūb* citing Shaykh al-Akbar says:

> Know that the unseen is of two kinds: [The first] unseen which cannot be known at all and is specific to Ĥaqq and [unseen] in relation to us; from our perspective this unseen is impossible to know and nobody can learn about it.
>
> The other is affiliated unseen: that is, something which is witnessed by one, is unseen by another; there is nothing in existence, which is such unseen, that nobody has beheld it – at the least, such a thing that exists witnesses itself and therefore unseen to everything except its own self; moreover, there is not a thing unseen, except that it ***can*** be witnessed in its unseen state by someone who has not witnessed it: when Allāh táālā wishes to make known to those whom He pleases, He informs them by giving them the knowledge [of that unseen; and thus they know] not be mere conjecture or guesswork.[461]

Keller's selective quotation is to benefit Thānawī's alibi; because he calls 'nisbi' knowledge merely that "each individual knows what another does not".

> Certain Deobandi ulema felt that Ahmad Reza Khan wanted to say that the Prophet's knowledge (Allah bless him and give him peace) went beyond the relative unseen,

We have seen earlier, that the founders of Deoband school – Gangohī and Nānotwī followed Ismāýīl Dihlawī and defended him; thereafter, all prominent Deobandis took that route.[462] Alahazrat is in the third generation of the controversy – it is ridiculous to suggest that the Deobandi response was a reaction to Alahazrat's fatāwā/opinions. Keller makes many such insinuations against Alahazrat, and we shall deal with them later, in-shā'Allāh; we will also examine the above statement in context of Thānawī's blasphemy further in this chapter.

> They regarded this as tantamount to associating others with Allah (shirk) and a grave innovation (bid'a).

Topsy-turvy again – it was Ismāýīl, who first claimed in *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān* that it was polytheism to believe that the Prophet ﷺ had knowledge of unseen; Deobandis are blind *muqallids* of Ismāýīl.

> Their response was strident and hyperbolic, comparing the knowledge of Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) to that of various lower creatures in a way that probably no Muslim had ever compared him before, and giving the offense whose kufr or iman we are discussing in this section.

The second and third generation of Wahābīs responded to the clarifications of Sunni scholars; and in these responses, they uttered more blasphemies. Keller acknowledges that the responses of Deobandis were insulting, but waters it down as "lower creatures." Thānawī compared the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ with madmen and beasts and Khalīl deemed that Satan had encompassing knowledge of the earth and RasūlAllāh ﷺ did not possess the same; one should not forget these facts.

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[461] Ibid., and cited by Kattānī in *Jalā'a al-Qulūb*, 1/151.

[462] Allāh táālā knows best if any of them disagreed.

What were their utterances an answer to?

Their utterances were not answers to any of Alahazrat's fatāwā or books. Keller is trying to reconstruct fantastic history around a few morsels of facts he has picked up here and there.

Did Ahmad Reza actually ascribe Allah's knowledge to the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace), inaugurating a bid'a that nothing but such retorts could extinguish?

The 'retorts' were not in response to Alahazrat's fatāwā or books – Khalīl's book *Barāhīn* was a response to *Anwār al-Saṭiáh* by Mawlānā Ábd al-Samīý and Thānawī's statement was in response to a question which neither mentions Alahazrat, nor is it indicative of his opinion.

Despite which, there are many Qur'anic verses that show that no one but Allah knows certain things, not even the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace), such as:

Keller then discusses a few things – mainly the knowledge of five things – which, according to him are not included in the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ, as is obvious from the quote above. Even though Keller attempts to explain what he calls the 'exotic prophetology' of Alahazrat, he is careful to attribute it to Alahazrat; in undertone it means that Keller does ***not*** believe that the five things – "five major unseen" are included in the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ:

There are many similar Qur'anic verses, all of which Ahmad Reza Khan interpreted…

By this interpretation Ahmad Reza was able to reach an accord between verses like those above…

…were understood by Ahmad Reza Khan to mean just that:

He discusses a few Ĥadīth, and also nudges the reader towards the impression that Deobandis also accept all this; and immediately does a subtle switch:

The Deobandis' impression however seems to be wrong that Ahmad Reza Khan wanted to go beyond this and say that the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) knew the particulars (juz'iyyat) of all being

This suggests that Deobandis agree to the beliefs mentioned earlier, but only object to something ***beyond this***, which he clarifies that Alahazrat did not profess – burning two strawmen at the same time.

In reality, neither did Alahazrat claim that RasūlAllāh ﷺ had complete knowledge in all particulars of everything, as accused by later Deobandis; nor was the blasphemy of Deobandis in response to such a purported belief; in fact, Thānawī's blasphemous passage mentions the difference of '*complete and partial*' and it is this part knowledge [*baáz*] that he derogatively questions: 'What is so special about it? Such knowledge is also possessed by madmen and beasts'.

Secondly, Deobandis like other Wahābīs claim that it is polytheism to believe that prophets were given knowledge of unseen, as we have shown earlier – Keller's '***beyond this***' is misleading and dishonest. Keller also attempts to convince the reader that Deobandis misunderstood Alahazrat's position, and Alahazrat misunderstood Deobandi statements – and hence his takfīr; if Deobandis had understood Alahazrat's position properly, they might not have uttered those blasphemous statements – which were retorts borne out of puritanical zeal and Alahazrat's takfīr was because he did not understand the Kellerian principle of takfīr which exempts anything so long as the intention to insult is not present.

> Despite such unambiguous words, certain Deobandi ulema made rebuttals of what they viewed as the grave innovation of confusing the extent of the Prophet's knowledge (Allah bless him and give him peace) with Allah's.

Deobandi 'rebuttals' were not in response to *Dawlah al-Makkiyyah*. This treatise was written much later.

> In the heat of argument, some of them met what they deemed exaggerated statements about the Prophet's knowledge (Allah bless him and give him peace) with equally exaggerated statements about of his lack of knowledge;

What a lame excuse! In the heat of argument, would anyone insult the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and would that be pardonable? Incidentally, a similar incident occurred long ago and the scholars of that time did not admit the excuse of 'heat of the argument':

The jurists of Andalucia ruled that the scholar Ibn Ĥatim al-Ţulayţulī[463] should be executed and hanged; because of what was witnessed about him that he denigrated the Prophet ﷺ when he referred to him ﷺ in the course of a debate as an 'orphan' and 'father-in-law of Ĥaydarah'[464] and he claimed that the Prophet's abstemiousness [*zuhd*] was not voluntary and if he could afford better things, he would have eaten them and other such things..[465]

Those elder scholars did not admit any excuse of 'in the heat of argument,' but Keller wants us to believe that the 'heat of argument' of the Deobandis persisted for decades – because none of the said Deobandis were remorseful of such harsh utterances. Rather, they insisted that they were right and did not deem it necessary to change these words or repent from such blasphemies. The Andalusian scholar was executed for his blasphemy which was uttered once – and Deobandis have been publishing and defending these blasphemies repeatedly, for more than a hundred years. All in the 'heat of argument' which has been unrelenting ever since.

> ...that there is no clear, unequivocal text in the Qur'an to support the belief that the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) has vast knowledge, though there is such evidence in regard to Satan and the Angel of Death.

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[463] Toledo, the capital city of Castile-La Mancha, an autonomous community of Spain; it is famous for the setting of the novel *Don Quixote*. Ţulayţulah in Arabic, but according to Khafājī the appellation is *Ţulayţilī*;Shumunnī says that it is *Ţulayţulī*.

[464] *Ĥaydarah*, meaning the cub of lion, is a nickname of Sayyidunā Álī ﷺ.

[465] *Kitāb al-Shifā*, p357.

Khalīl Aĥmad was not talking about absolute knowledge and Keller is misrepresenting his position. This is a strawman Deobandis love to burn as seen in *Muhannad,* where the question is posed whether Deobandis deem Satan's knowledge greater than that of RasūlAllāh ﷺ ***absolutely;*** and Khalīl confidently answers that they did not say that. The trick here is to transform it as 'absolutely' – *muṭlaqan* – which, indeed Khalīl Aĥmad did not say in his *Barāhīn*. What Khalīl had said was that the encompassing knowledge of the earth is proven for Satan but unproven for RasūlAllāh ﷺ – and proving the same knowledge for RasūlAllāh ﷺ is polytheism. Deobandis try to fool common folk in two ways:

- It does not diminish the rank of RasūlAllāh ﷺ if we say that Satan knows something which he ﷺ does not because knowledge has no correlation to superiority; and hence it is not blasphemy;
- To claim that Satan had more knowledge ***absolutely*** is abhorrent and certainly kufr; we[466] did not make this claim.

It is kufr to claim that anybody has more knowledge than RasūlAllāh ﷺ, let alone the accursed Devil as Khafājī has said in his commentary of *Shifā*:

> {**Know may Allāh táālā give guidance to us and you**} to recognise the right of the Prophet ﷺ and the obligations to fulfil it {**everything that is insulting to the Prophet**} that is, disrespecting him {**or faulted him**} which is even more generic than insult; so if anyone says: "such a person is more knowledgeable than him ﷺ," verily, he has faulted him and denigrated him – even if he has not insulted him {**or adduced a flaw in his person**} that is in his physical appearance or in his character…[467]

The citation ends with the ruling concerning such a person that, regardless of its proportion, it is apostasy and the person is judged under the rule of blasphemy – punishable by death.

(1) That Ahmad Reza's proof of the vastness of the Prophet's knowledge (Allah bless him and give him peace) is based on a false analogy

Khalīl Aĥmad was answering Mawlānā Ábd al-Samīý and his *Anwār*; Alahazrat was nowhere in the picture; Keller's description of the interaction is merely fanciful. Keller also mentions statements from *Barāhīn* and examines the validity of those arguments, which we will not discuss here.[468]

This final rhetorical question, denying any evidence of the Prophet's (Allah bless him and give him peace) vast knowledge after affirming it of the Devil and the Angel of Death, was what made Ahmad Reza Khan Barelwi say that Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri had thereby demeaned and insulted the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) and left Islam.

Keller acknowledges that Khalīl has affirmed a certain knowledge for the Devil but denied the same for RasūlAllāh ﷺ, but still says:

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[466] That is, the Deobandis.

[467] *Nasīm ar-Riyāđ*, Shihābuddīn Khafāji 4/146. Quotes in bold and parantheses are from Qāđī Íyāđ's *Shifā*.

[468] There are many refutations of *Barāhīn*, including one by the author of Anwār e Sāţiáh, in the second edition. Alahazrat refuted this 'analogy' in a separate work *Inbā'a al-Muşţafā* in 1318 AH, in which he has refuted it in a more referenced and sound manner than Keller's perfunctory response.

> Because *takfir* is divisive and dangerous,

Anybody who insults or denigrates the Prophet ﷺ is a kāfir. Making takfīr of such a scoundrel is a religious duty and scholars have written that anyone who doubts in the kufr of a blasphemer is himself a kāfir. Notice, that Keller slightly alters the statement where Khalīl deemed it polytheism to believe for RasulAllah ﷺ, the same vastness which was permissible for Satan:

> that believing the Prophet's knowledge (Allah bless him and give him peace) to encompass the terrestrial realm, and to be incomparably vaster than the Devil's or the Angel of Death's, constitutes "an act of *shirk*," and "rejecting

Even an astute reader may miss this trick and the quick switch in the above passage. Keller says that the 'shirk' claimed by Khalīl was in believing "knowledge ***incomparably vaster*** than the Devil's" and thereby shift the focus of comparison; whereas, what Khalīl said was – in Keller's translation:

> Such vastness [of knowledge] is established for Satan and the Angel of Death through scriptural texts. Through what decisive scriptural text has the Pride of the World's vastness of knowledge been established, that one should affirm an act of *shirk* by rejecting all scriptural texts?"

Deobandis and their apologists try to portray these as two separate passages without any connection whereas, it is the same compound sentence from *Barāhīn* in the original Urdu:

> One should ponder, that by looking at the state of Satan and the Angel of Death, [and then] proving such encompassing knowledge of the earth for the Pride of the World, without any scriptural evidence and by fallacious analogy – if this is not polytheism, then which part of faith is it? This extensiveness of knowledge for Satan and the Angel of Death is proven by scriptural proof; where is such scriptural proof for the extensiveness of the knowledge of the Pride of the World, thereby refuting all scriptural proofs to establish one polytheistic belief?

The thing debated by Khalīl here is thus:

1. Knowledge of the terresterial realm is given to Satan
2. The above is proven by scriptural proofs
3. There is no scriptural proof for **SUCH** knowledge for RasūlAllāh ﷺ.
4. And proving **SUCH** knowledge for RasūlAllāh ﷺ is *shirk*, polytheism.

This much is evident from Keller's own translation.[469] By introducing "incomparably vaster," Keller alters the meaning, which implies that Khalīl was talking about knowledge far more than that of creation, and suggestive of *ilm muṭlaq* of the Almighty, which is undoubtedly *shirk*.

> First of all, Khalil Ahmad is correct in pointing out...
>
> ...as well as the knowledge possessed by Satan and the Angel of Death, conclusively proves that there is no strict analogy between the two things.

[469] Apparently Hamza Karamali has provided the English translations of the Urdu passages as mentioned in endnote #27, but here it is attributed to Keller following his citation.

How is it conclusively proven? This proceeds from the premise that RasūlAllāh ﷺ is the most knowledgeable in the creation and he was given the knowledge of all those past and those who come in the future. Following from this premise, whatever knowledge you prove for Satan is included in the vast knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ unless they have excluded Satan from creation – *máādhAllāh*.

> To imply however that Ahmad Reza's whole argument hinges on this erroneous analogy is attacking a straw man. Even if the analogy was adduced by Reza

Here also, Keller burns two strawmen: assumption that Alahazrat adduced the analogy, and secondly the analogy was erroneous. Actually, Khalīl's own premise that it is based on analogy of 'superiority' is incorrect; the analogy in *Anwār e Sāṭiáh* was about RasūlAllāh ﷺ having the knowledge of everyone in the creation and therefore, includes knowledge of Satan and Angel of Death. Keller cites the blasphemous passage from *Barāhīn* once again, but stubbornly ignores the comparison with the Devil and tries to shift the focus on something else. However, Keller correctly understands one of the implications of the passage –

> Moreover, it is difficult to see how the attribute of knowledge that Khalil Ahmad ascribes to Satan and the Angel of Death should become "*shirk*" when affirmed of the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and give him peace): either it is a divine attribute that is shirk to ascribe to any creature, or it is not.

But he still does not deem it a blasphemy, and immediately dilutes his criticism:

> But even if we overlook these mistaken innuendos,

Khalīl's blasphemy was only a 'mistaken innuendo' – Imām Subkī might have written a 500 page treatise on the issue of disrespecting the Prophet ﷺ, but Keller is unperturbed, because according to his own principle, anything can be said as long as the intention to insult is not present. Otherwise, how can he admit that Khalīl denied the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ which he affirms for Satan, and not even say anything harsh about such a comparison? It is pertinent to note that Alahazrat also pointed out the same thing and made takifr which was attested by the scholars of Ĥaramayn.

> Khalil Ahmad's point as a whole, denying that the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) had vast knowledge, after affirming it of the Devil and the Angel of Death, is erroneous, for at least three reasons.

Keller acknowledges candidly that such a comparison would be unacceptable to Muslims, but still does not consider it kufr. Alas, where does it leave Keller himself?

> In sum, Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri's disadvantageously comparing the Prophet's knowledge (Allah bless him and give him peace) to Satan's, the vilest creature in existence—regardless of the point he was making—is something few Muslims can accept.

Qāđī Íyāđ said in Shifā, which Imām Subkī has also cited:

> If a person utters anything mentioned in this chapter, which scholars have deemed as insulting and derogatory to the Prophet ﷺ, such a person who utters these things shall be executed. No scholar has differed in this issue – neither the ancients nor the later ones, even though they differed [on the circumstances] to rule for execution.[470]

[470] *Shifā*, p357.

One should be extremely careful even when describing issues which are permissible to talk about; even if it is in defence of RasūlAllāh ﷺ and words should be chosen that they shouldn't sound derogatory:

> …and when he discusses about the immunity [*ísmah*] accorded to him, and talks of his actions and his speech, he should strive to find the best expression and phrase in a way[471] that is mindful of his respect as much as possible and avoid using coarse and graceless descriptions; he should abstain from descriptions which are crude and impudent, words such as ignorance, lies or sin. For example, if one talks about his ﷺ speech, one should say: "Is it permissible for him to say anything contrary to truth, or inform something that has not occurred, by mistake..?" or in a similar manner and avoid the word "lie" altogether. Similarly, talking about his knowledge, one should say: "Is it possible that he did not have knowledge except what he was given" or "Is it possible that he did not have knowledge of some things until it was given to him by revelation." One should not use the word "ignorance" because of its ugliness and hideousness.[472]

Keller has understood that Khalīl tried to show that the Prophet's knowledge is less than the Devil's:

> Whether Khalil Ahmad regarded it as a feat of ingenuity to show that because the Prophet's knowledge was less than the Devil's, it was a fortiori less than Allah's, or whatever his impulse may have been, he badly stumbled in

He also acknowledges that Muslims anywhere would be repulsed by such a description:

> In any previous Islamic community, whether in Hyderabad, Kabul, Baghdad, Cairo, Fez, or Damascus—in short, practically anywhere besides the British India of his day—Muslims would have found his words repugnant and unacceptable

Agreed, Keller himself does not find it repugnant, nor will he be outraged; but, why is it a scandal if Alahazrat, or other Muslims are outraged? Here too, Keller insinuates that Muslims in British India of his day did ***not*** find it repugnant and unacceptable, probably to sell the notion that Alahazrat was an exception and everybody in India had accepted it without demur. In reality, Khalīl Aĥmad was refuted by many scholars prior to Alahazrat and after him – nobody except the Deobandis made excuses for such blasphemous descriptions.

> The same is true of the Deobandi teacher Ashraf Ali Thanwi, who in a written objection to Ahmad Reza Khan's calling the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) "Knower of the Unseen" ('Alim al-Ghayb), asked whether this "unseen" refers to merely some of the unseen or part of it:

It is Keller's hyperactive imagination – firstly, Ashraf Álī Thānawī's *Ĥifż al-Īmān* was not a "written objection to Ahmad Reza Khān" and secondly, where did Alahazrat call the Prophet ﷺ "Knower of the Unseen"? In fact, he disallowed that anyone can be called *áālim al-ghayb,* other than Allāh táālā.

> …in my opinion and according to my research, the term "Knower of Unseen" can be said only with Allāh táālā because, according to common parlance [*úrf*] it implies knowledge by one's own self [*dhātī*].

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[471] *aĥsan al-lafż wa adab al-íbarah;* Here is Qāđī Íyāđ advising us to be careful in describing his ismah! Would they tolerate these wretched passages which seek to diminish the rank and knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ? Would they not consider such things disrespectful? But Keller's taṣawwuf probably does not have time for such things...*lā ĥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh.*

[472] Ibid. p375.

> …even though the Prophet ﷺ was given knowledge of many unseen, and knows *mā kāna wa mā yakūn*, but "Knower of Unseen" can be said only for Allāh táālā.[473]

This fatwā is dated 1339, but it was never the issue of Alahazrat of using this term for the Prophet ﷺ, and indeed, if Keller or any Deobandi has proof for the contrary, let them present it – there are many short and long works of Alahazrat on this issue of "Knowledge of Unseen" and many fatāwā to peruse if they are willing to do so. Keller manufactures facts and attributes positions to Alahazrat; and then gives explanations, justifications and even sympathises with Alahazrat's purported sayings. It may appear profound to the unknowing, but for us, it is a cock-and-bull fable.

Ĥifż al-Īmān was a fatwā written in 1319 in response to three questions; and Zayd, to whom these ideas are attributed in the query cannot refer to Alahazrat. The question is thus:[474]

> What is the opinion of [scholars who are] defenders of religion and helpers of the majestic sharīáh, concerning the following statements of Zayd:
>
> 1. Prostration [*sajdah*] is of two types: Prostration of worship and veneration [*tábbudī, tażimī*]. prostration of worship is specific [and permissible to do] to Allāh táālā, and prostration of veneration is not specific to anyone – therefore, it is permissible to do *sajdah* to graves in veneration.
> 2. To do circumambulation of graves is permissible because Mawlānā Shāh Walīyullāh Muĥaddith Dihlawī has said: "…and then to circumambulate [*ţawāf*] seven times around [the grave] reciting takbir, and start from the right side and place his cheek on the left" [*Intibāh*, p10]. This proves that making circuit and prostrating to graves, and to kiss those graves is permissible.
> 3. There are two types of Knowledge of Unseen: By self [*dhātī*] and except Allāh táālā nobody is a Knower of Unseen in this meaning. And [second] by means [of being informed] and in this meaning, RasūlAllāh was also Knower of Unseen.
>
> What is the status of the evidence presented by Zayd, his belief and his practice?

Alahazrat never permitted making *sajdah* or *ţawāf* of graves – even though his masterpiece on the subject *Zubdatu'z Zakiyyah,* is a much later work (1337) in which he wrote a lengthy refutation of such practices. The statements of 'Zayd' above, can never be those of Alahazrat. Obviously, Keller's Deobandi murids Hamza Karamali and Faraz Rabbani helped their shaykh with translations – but I cannot understand why these squires did not warn their master; perhaps they too believed that they were facing giants and were confident that their master would slay them. Keller mentions the blasphemous passage of Thānawī's fatwā in translation which has a number of tweaks and euphemisms. We shall present both translations for comparison and a scan of the original is included in Appendix C for third-party verification.

> If it refers to but some of the unseen, then how is the Revered One [the Prophet] (Allah bless him and give him peace) uniquely special, when such unseen knowledge is possessed by Zayd and 'Amr [i.e. just anyone], indeed, by every child and madman, and even by all animals and beasts? For every individual knows something that is hidden from another individual, so everyone should be called "knower of the unseen." . . . [And] if it refers to all of the unseen, such that not one instance of it remains unknown, then this is incorrect because of scriptural and rational proofs

[473] *Fatāwā ar-Riđawiyyah*, 29/405.

[474] *Ĥifż al-Īmān*.

Our translation of passage (from Urdu):

> If the attribution of knowledge to his[475] blessed person by Zayd[476] is valid, then it is necessary to enquire – whether he refers to partial knowledge or complete knowledge? If this refers to a part of such knowledge of unseen,[477] then where is the exclusiveness of RasūlAllāh ﷺ in this?[478] Such knowledge is [posessed by] Zayd and Ámr;[479] rather, children and madmen; rather, all animals and quadrupeds also possess [such knowledge]. Because, every person has knowledge of something that is hidden from another; then, it becomes necessary to call everyone a knower of the unseen.[480]

This much is a contiguous quote; Alahazrat analysed this and refuted it in his *Tamhid e Īmān*, which is available in English translation as *Preamble to Faith*. We shall not dwell on it here, but any native Urdu speaker can see that Thānawī compared the "knowledge" of RasūlAllāh ﷺ with that of madmen and beasts – not just compare, but explicitly said that RasūlAllāh ﷺ has no exclusivity, or his knowledge is uniquely special, and Keller deftly shifts the focus from such blasphemy; after all, he has prepared the mindset earlier where he explained the classification of *ghayb*, and here he encashes upon that premise:

> Thanwi apparently meant that the Prophet's (Allah bless him and give him peace) knowledge of the unseen was *the same in kind* as that any of the others mentioned, that is, the knowledge of the *relative* unseen, which, as explained above, merely means that each of Allah's creatures knows something that is "unseen" to others, while Allah alone has absolute knowledge of *all* of the unseen.

Recall, how he has described this earlier:

> The relative unseen (*al-ghayb al-nisbi*) is a fact of everyday life, and is merely that each individual knows things others are unaware of, hence "unseen" in relation to them.

But still, how is it not insulting? For example, dogs and pigs are also living – would it not be insulting to say: What is uniquely special about Keller's life, when dogs and pigs also have such life and are living? What is uniquely special about Keller's clothes, when madmen and kāfirs also wear sweatshirts?[481] What is uniquely special about Keller eating food, when pigs and donkeys also eat food? Those who find the above statements disrespectful, but do not accept that a similar statement said about RasūlAllāh ﷺ is insulting, should be ashamed of their hypocrisy. Keller should recall his sermons on context – and the context here can be known from the paragraphs that follow these controversial lines; this rhetorical question is negating 'knowledge of unseen' for the Prophet. Thānawī says further:

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[475] The Prophet ﷺ.

[476] Zayd: a name used for illustration.

[477] *báaz úlūm e ghaybiyyah.*

[478] In Urdu: ***ĥuzūr***; and this is meant to refer to RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

[479] An idiom to say anyone; like it is said in English: 'Tom, Dick and Harry'.

[480] ***áālimu'l ghayb.***

[481] Apparently Keller's clothes are auctioned for barakah.

> And then, if Zayd makes it binding upon himself, that he shall call everyone a knower of unseen, then why does he consider this as an exclusive attribute of prophethood? An attribute in which, there is no exclusivity for believers – not even exclusivity for humans;[482] then, how can this be an exclusive attribute of prophethood?[483]

It is clear that Thānawī is not just talking about the category of 'nisbi' knowledge, but emphasises that 'such' knowledge of unseen is nothing special – not even exclusive to humans! In which case:

عَٰلِمُ ٱلْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَىٰ غَيْبِهِۦٓ أَحَدًا ۝ إِلَّا مَنِ ٱرْتَضَىٰ مِن رَّسُولٍ

He is the Knower of Unseen; he does not reveal His Knowledge of Unseen
to anyone – except to His beloved Messengers[484]

Will Keller and Deobandis – *MáādhAllāh* – call madmen and beasts as: "Beloved Messengers of Allāh táālā"? Because:

1. Thānawī says that there is no exclusivity for prophets in such knowledge of unseen.
2. Keller claims that Thānawī is talking about the "category of such unseen" and notice that he has mentioned only two categories: complete and relative [*muṭlaq* and *nisbi*].
3. The Qur'ān says that "unseen is given to His beloved Messengers".
4. According to Thānawī, this knowledge is not exclusive to prophets; even animals and madmen possess this kind of knowledge.
5. Therefore, by Thānawī's own logic ("then you should call everyone knower of the unseen"), animals and madmen are – *MáādhAllāh* – Beloved Messengers of Allāh?

We ask Allāh táālā to forgive us.

> Aside from Thanwi's artless comparison of the highest of creation with the lowest,

Is it not blasphemy? Keller may not mind such things and brush them aside, but for us – and indeed, the scholars of Ĥaramayn, it is this blasphemous comparison that deserves takfīr, even if he is mistaken in his understanding of the categorisation of knowledge – how can he compare RasūlAllāh ﷺ with such lowly things?

> the very point of saying it in refutation of Reza is not plain,

Apologies for repetition: Thānawī's statement was not in refutation of 'Reza'.

> ...in view of the latter's explicit acknowledgement... as Reza says

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[482] Thānawī has in the previous paragraph said it explicitly that even animals have similar knowledge; so it is not exclusive to prophets, or even believers, or even humans. In other words, Thānawī says: knowledge is not a trait that can be considered as special for prophets.

[483] *Ĥifẓ al-Īmān,* Ashraf Álī Thānawī, 1319 AH.

[484] Sūrah Jinn, 72:26-27.

Unless Thānawī had 'knowledge of unseen,' he could not have seen *Dawlah* of Alahazrat before writing *Ĥifż al-Īmān,* as *Dawlah* was written five years later. Perhaps, this fact will make things plain to Keller.

> make it easy to see why Reza and others called him "Knower of the Unseen"—

Where did Alahazrat call RasūlAllāh ﷺ as "Knower of the Unseen"? Besides, Keller supports a wrong position: it is not permissible to call anyone "Knower of the Unseen" except Allāh táālā.

> and that by any measure, he possessed knowledge plainly not of the same order as that possessed "by every child and madman, and even by all animals and beasts," to use Thanwi's phrase.

Here, Keller acknowledges that Thānawī's phrase could also mean "in magnitude" which is also blasphemous and kufr. When he didn't balk when Khalīl claimed that Satan had knowledge which RasūlAllāh ﷺ did not have, would he hesitate here? According to Keller, this much is not enough to consider it blasphemy or kufr.

> At the latter words, the fiery pen of Ahmad Reza Khan wrote his *Husam al-Haramayn*

Alahazrat did not *write* his *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn* upon Thānawī's statement – this is another example of Keller's ignorance. He knows nothing about the issue – he must have picked up a few translations, a few names and he spins a fine yarn, always knowing better than those backward oriental folk.

In 1320, Alahazrat republished the work of Imām Faḍl al-Rasūl Badāyūnī, *Al-Mútaqad al-Muntaqad* – with corrections (errors of transcription in existing editions) and along with his own annotations titled, *Al-Mustanad al-Mútamad*, which has a fatwā part in the concluding section of the book about contemporary heretics. In 1323/24, during his second Ĥajj, he presented this part to scholars of Ĥaramayn, who agreed with his ruling and wrote elaborate attestations. The fatwā and attestations were published together with facing Urdu translation as *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn* in 1325.

> without referring to the context of their remarks,

Only a Deobandi lover can have such audacity, despite such ignorance. Keller's slanderous accusation that Alahazrat did not 'refer to the context of their remarks' is a lie. *Barāhin e Qaṭiáh* was already refuted by Mawlānā Ghulām Dastagīr Qaşūrī in his *Taqdīs al-Wakīl* in 1307/1308 and the scholars of Ĥaramayn were aware of Khalīl's work; concerning the fatwā of *wuqūú*, upon which Gangohī was ruled kāfir, Alahazrat presented the photocopy of that fatwā to the scholars – which is included in Appendix C. Thānawī's blasphemy was also explained with illustrations.

> or what they had been written in reply to

How could Alahazrat write in 1320, in *Mustanad* that all these Deobandi 'retorts' from previous years, some sixteen years ago, were in response to *Dawlah al-Makkiyyah*, which would be written four years later in 1324? Even when the fatwā of *Ĥusām* was presented to Meccan scholars in 1323, *Dawlah* was not written – Khalīl Aĥmad was around, but even he was not cognisant of this critical point which only Keller's ingenuity could fathom.

Is this what Keller teaches in his 'suhbahs'? To pretend that you know everything even when you don't know a thing? If he has said this in full knowledge, isn't it deception and aren't these lies? And if he has been fooled by his squires who fed him false information, where is the high standard of "not accepting hearsay" that he laments on the grand plains of self-righteousness? Is this what sincere scholarship means? To pick up a few names and few quotes and write an entirely fictitious account of the whole thing – with such confidence that a reader might be fooled into thinking that the author must have spent years researching the issue?

> "It is lying enough for a man to repeat everything he hears," because as Imam Nawawi observes, "one generally hears both truth and falsehood, and to repeat everything one hears without checking will necessarily mean telling lies"

> His fatwa of kufr against the Deobandis, however, was a mistake.

Yes, those hundreds of Ĥanafī scholars who attested Ĥusām in the subcontinent were all fools and did not know what Keller knows; those who attested Alahazrat's fatwā which includes Ĥanafī scholars in Ĥaramayn, such as Shaykh Abū Ĥusayn Marzuqi, Shaykh Ṣaliĥ Kamāl, Shaykh Ismāýīl Khalīl and Shaykh Ábd al-Ĥaqq Ilāhabādī, who had emigrated to Makkah and was of Indian origin.

Keller needs to learn his Shāfiýī fiqh properly before commenting on a person like Alahazrat, whose command of Ĥanafī fiqh is evident from his fatāwā; Keller cites:

> A fatwa may not be given of the unbelief of a Muslim whose words are interpretable as having a valid meaning, or about the unbelief of which there is a difference of scholarly opinion, even if weak

And then says:

> First, the Deobandis' words *are* interpretable as "having a valid meaning,"

Even if he cannot understand Urdu, Keller still knows better than native Urdu speakers by merely looking at the translation of a few passages by his Deobandi murids, which he thinks were said 'in the heat of argument'.

> for they can be construed as making a distinction, however crudely, between Allah's knowledge of the "absolute unseen" and man's knowledge of the "relative unseen."

He has acknowledged that the Deobandis made crude comparisons – which is kufr by *ijmāá*.

> Secondly, there is a valid "difference of scholarly opinion" about the unbelief of such words, for "even if weak" in the above Hanafi text means, according to commentator Ibn 'Abidin

May the damnation of Allāh táālā be upon liars – Keller, not content with slandering scholars of Islām, proceeds to make false accusations on the pristine sharīáh. He tries to find excuses for blasphemers, even after acknowledging that such words were blasphemy and acknowledges that no Muslim can tolerate such words.

Besides, "scholarly opinion" is only in Keller's fantasy land; similar to his revisionist history and phantasmic unfolding of events which we have seen above. No scholar of Islām has differed that when disrespectful words are said about RasūlAllāh ﷺ, regardless of the intention, if such words are uttered voluntarily and not under duress, they are deemed blasphemy – and kufr; even if the person says such things in a state of inebriation.

Keller's following attribution to Imām Subkī is untrue:

> As we have seen, a difference of opinion does exist in another school, namely the position of the Shafi'i Imam Subki that one must give "due consideration to the intention behind that which gives offense"

We will repeat those quotes once again – from Shāfiýī imāms, unless of course, Keller knows more about Shāfiýī fiqh than Ibn Ĥajar al-Haytami:

> Even if the person proves that he has not deliberately said any of this to deride him ﷺ; or intended to insult or disparage him ﷺ – whether it was ignorance that made him say such things or because he was discontented or disgruntled, or he was inebriated, or he blurted it out without thinking or it slipped from his tongue, or because of haughtiness or impudence, or impetuousity and recklessness; in all such cases, the ruling is the same as in the first case – that is, execution without further deliberation or any hesitation, because the excuse of ignorance [in such cases] which cause apostasy is inadmissible, nor the excuse of slip of the tongue, nor any other excuse which I have mentioned above as long as the person is sane and has not lost his reason.
>
> Except a person in duress, who utters such things due to coercion – as long as faith is undisturbed in his heart. It is therefore, that the Andalusian scholars decreed against Ibn Ĥātim when he repudiated the zuhd of RasūlAllāh ﷺ, as mentioned earlier.[485]

Haytami reiterates that in explicit insults, the excuse of intention to insult is inadmissible:

> [Qāđī Íyāđ's] opinion is obvious and confirms to the principles of our madh'hab. Because someone is ruled kāfir based on what is observed from the outside; one cannot look at his motives or intentions, nor consider the context in which he has said so. However, the excuse of a person who claims that he did not know will be accepted according to the state and conditions of his Islām. His excuse will also be accepted if he claims that it was a slip of the tongue – only to ward off the death penalty, even though it is not accepted in the matter of divorce and manumission; because the former is the right of Allāh táālā to forgive and the latter two require forgiveness of humans.[486]

Moreover, Keller is attempting to draw a favourable interpretation from explicit insults – which he has himself acknowledged when he said that such statements would not be acceptable by Muslims anywhere. Imām Subkī says concerning explicit insults:

> Ĥabīb ibn Rabīý said: Because the claim of 'favourable interpretation' is not admissible in explicit words[487]
>
> ---
>
> All of this is cited from Qāđī Íyāđ ﷺ, and much of it is cited earlier [as fragments]; but I thought of mentioning all of it here, as it is appropriate in this place. All texts of Shāfiýīs, Ĥanafīs and Ĥanbalīs agree and are

[485] *Iýlām*, p82; *Shifā*, p364.

[486] Ibid.

[487] *Sayf*, p407.

concordant that [all] of it is insult and [thus] apostasy which deserves to be punished by execution; they only differed whether the person's repentance is accepted.[488]

Imām Subkī has himself clearly differentiated between *sabb* and *adhā*:

I have mentioned in my book *Sayf al-Maslul,* the principle that whosoever intends to hurt [*adhā*] the Prophet ﷺ deserves to be executed such as Ábdullāh ibn Ubayy and those who did not intend to hurt the Prophet ﷺ, such as Mistaĥ and Ĥamnah, do not deserve to be executed.

However, concerning insulting [*sabb*] the Prophet ﷺ, ijmāá is established that it is kufr; and mocking him ﷺ is kufr; Allāh táālā says: "***Tell them: 'Do you make fun of Allāh táālā, His verses and His Prophet?' Do not make excuses – you have become infidels after having professed faith***." Rather, even if you do not mock him; Abū Úbayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām ruled a person kāfir for memorising half a [poetic] verse which disparaged the Prophet ﷺ.[489]

Or will Keller repudiate these Shāfiýī imāms as well?

> The sahih hadiths we have cited above show how strong this position of Subki's is, for the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) was in one instance reproved by an upset wife with the words "I don't see but that your Lord rushes to fulfill your own whims"

Perhaps Haytami needs instruction in Shāfiýī fiqh by Keller, and indeed on matters of apostasy and blasphemy – even though his work *Iýlām* is considered an authority in this subject:

[Scholars have said:] It is proven that he ﷺ ordered the execution of those who hurt him or disparaged him; it is his right and it is his choice [to punish or spare those who hurt him]. He chose to execute some people and forgave some others. After his passing away, there is no way others can differentiate on what merits forgiveness, and therefore the ruling is generic that [a person who hurts him] is executed because we do not know if he should be forgiven. It is not allowed for his followers [ummah] after him to forego his right, because the only permission [we are given and] reported from him, is to punish the blasphemer.[490]

Keller's inability to understand the issue is incredible and maddenning – worse than the sophomore Salafī, who has hardly read a couple of abridged Ĥadīth translations and begins to do ijtihād and criticises positions of madh'habs.

> …actually seized and choked by a bedouin demanding charity—none of which did he consider a deliberate offense or kufr, because each was interpretable as an unintentional insult.

Firstly, scholars clarify that these were not insults notwithstanding the palpable harm caused to the Prophet. Secondly, it was the Prophet's ﷺ right to forgive – and it is not permissible for anyone else to forgive. We ask this question once again: What is the yardstick to judge someone's intention? How will Keller determine a blasphemer's claims that he never intended to insult the Prophet ﷺ?

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[488] Ibid., p410.

[489] *Fatāwā Imām Subkī* 2/573.

[490] *Iýlām*, p112.

It is also noteworthy that in each of these instances, the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) with instinctive compassion and wisdom gave due consideration to the emotional states that pushed people beyond the ordinary bounds of adab or manners with him.

How will Keller explain the *intentional* insults that he ﷺ forgave? Did he punish Ábdullāh ibn Ubayy despite explicit insults? Why do you not follow the Prophet's ﷺ example in that case? It is clear that it was the Prophet's ﷺ right and his prerogative to punish or forgive – nobody can forgive that right after his passing away. Keller should properly read Shāfiýī fiqh before suggesting Ĥanafīs to adapt to it.

The vehemence of Deobandi writers "defending Islam against shirk," however misplaced, plainly affected the way they spoke about the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and give him peace).

This is true only in Keller's wonderland; in reality, Deobandis are Wahābīs, and they were only defending their madh'hab in which reverence of the Prophet ﷺ is shirk as Ismāýīl has explained.

The above hadiths suggest that due consideration should be given to the emotions aroused by the "fatwa wars" of their times, just as the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) gave consideration to people's emotions.

A person making such outrageous statements can be considered a waliy and a scholar and a sufi only in our times. How can an ignoramus who does not even know the rights of the Prophet ﷺ, progress on the path to reach Allāh táālā?

This does not mean that the words chosen by these writers were acceptable, even if "retorting against bid'a," or "fighting shirk."

Again and again Keller acknowledges that the statements were unacceptable when talking about RasūlAllāh ﷺ, but is obstinate that it is not kufr.

Looking back, one cannot help wondering why Khalil Ahmad's and Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi's own students and teachers and friends did not ask them, before their opponents asked them:

Khalīl's teacher Gangohī read the book *Barāhīn* intently, from the beginning to the end and praised its author;[491] why do you expect him to be offended? Ashraf Álī was raised in this environment of belittling the Prophet ﷺ, but Keller misses the point again. ***Did they retract or show remorse when their opponents asked them?*** Ashraf Álī agreed to change one or two words in his blasphemous passage but insisted that he was right and the change was meant only to avoid dismay of some followers and commoners.

When did any Islamic scholar ever compare the knowledge of the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) to the depraved, to the mad, or to animals—even to make a point? Few Muslims would suffer such a comparison to be made with their own father, let alone the Emissary of God (Allah bless him and give him peace).

[491] Gangohī has described it thus in his attestation of the book.

SubhānAllāh! It is so repugnant that Keller will not tolerate such things for his own father – but he will not consider it as blasphemy of RasūlAllāh ﷺ. This is sheer madness.[492]

حُبُّكَ الشيءَ يُعْمي ويُصِمّ

> But while such words were indefensible breaches of proper respect, they were not kufr, because the intention behind them was not to insult the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace),

Of course, he does not consider it kufr because of his peculiar rule of intention.

> Imputed intentionality is a fallacy because the rigorously authenticated proofs we have seen are too clear to misunderstand

Keller does not know the basic difference between harm and insult and it is the right of RasūlAllāh ﷺ to forgive whosoever he wishes; and we have no right to forgive anyone who disrespects the Prophet ﷺ. Keller should probably read the commentaries of those Ĥadīth he has quoted and spare some time to reflect on the context of those Ĥadīth – and read the opinions of Shāfiýī imāms.

> and is therefore without the legal consequences it would have had if it had been intentional.

This is the Keller's own opinion and arbitrary at that – Haytami has clearly said that anyone uttering explicit insults, voluntarily, is a blasphemer and an apostate regardless of his intention.

> Khalil Ahmad's and Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi's comparisons of the Prophet's knowledge (Allah bless him and give him peace) *were* offensive in their wording, and certainly not of the "ordinary scholarly discourse" acceptable among Muslims.

Following the classical definition of propaganda, Keller repeats this ad nauseum and here gives a catholic tinge to it – a layman may misinterpret that scholars have a special privilege to say things which common Muslims cannot because he says:

> But because they were *intended* as scholarly discourse, to emphasize the human limitations of the Prophet's knowledge

Keller is actually saying here that the blasphemies were said with the intention *to prove a point* and not to insult and therefore pardonable – which is ridiculous and underlines Keller's ignorance.

> not as an insult against the Prophet—their words did not entail the judgement of *kufr* that Ahmad Reza Khan issued against them

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[492] The quote in Arabic below means: "***Your love of a thing will make [you] blind and deaf***." Ibn Kathīr cites from Imām Aĥmed [#21590] and Abū Dāwūd [#5130] narrating from Abū Dardā'a; Sakhāwī says citing [Zaynuddīn] al-Írāqī that it is not very weak and can probably be deemed a fair [Ĥasan] report [*Maqāṣid al-Ĥasanah* #381].

Keller repeats it again; and such an unreliable person summarily dismisses Alahazrat's fatwā.

> The other 'aqida-related issues outlined above upon which Qasim Nanotwi and Rashid Ahmad Gangohi differed with Ahmad Reza are things that Muslim theologians can disagree about and still remain Muslim.

Qāsim and Rashid differed with Ahmad Reza? I am surprised why he has not mentioned the fairy tale that Qāsim, Rashid, Thānawī and Khalīl were all buddies in school and had a spat with Alahazrat; piqued and remembering this playground fight, Alahazrat ruled them all kāfir after he became a muftī.[493]

Secondly, this means that Nuh Keller agrees that there are six 'seals of prophets' in the six earths and if a prophet were to appear in this very earth, it would not affect the 'finality' of our Master ﷺ. Does Keller consider Qādiyānīs as kāfirs or not? If so, why? If they are kāfirs, then why not Qāsim Nānotwī? Haytami says listing things that entail 'belying the Messenger':

> ...or **deems in the possibility of prophethood of anyone**, after the coming of our Prophet.[494]

> They are not fundamentals of Islam, but rather inferences drawn through ijtihad from Qur'anic verses and hadiths about issues that have been historically disagreed upon by scholars greater than these.

Which is another lie; may Allāh's damnation be upon liars. No Sunni scholar has said that the finality of the Prophet ﷺ is unaffected even if a new prophet were to appear on this earth – no Sunni scholar has said that it is possible for Allāh táālā to lie - no Sunni scholar compared the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ with lower beings – Keller has forgotten his own preachment:

> **When did any Islamic scholar ever compare the knowledge of the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) to the depraved, to the mad, or to animals—even to make a point?**

> As for Ahmad Reza's contention on the last page of *Husam al-Haramayn* that whoever does not declare the kufr of an unbeliever

Assuming that Keller is talking about the last page of Alahazrat's fatwā preceding attestations, either Keller has not seen the original quotation – or if he has indeed seen it, he is incapable of comprehending simple passages; and if he has understood it properly, he has purposely misrepresented Alahazrat's position and indulged in lies and deception. Here is that quote from *Ĥusām*:

> In *Bazzāziyyah*, *Durar wa'l Ghurar*, *Fatāwā Khayriyyah*, *Majmaá al-Anhur*, *Durr al-Mukhtār* and other reliable books, **concerning this kind of unbelievers** it is said: "whoever doubts in the kufr and punishment of such a person is himself a kāfir." In Shifā, it is said: "we make takfīr of a person who does not do takfīr of those who deem beliefs other than Islām as valid or hesitates [doubts] in considering it as kufr"[495]

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[493] This is not just a hypothetical example; I have heard Deobandis repeating this myself, albeit only Thānawī is mentioned in that story as Alahazrat's classmate. One such fairy tale by the Deobandi author, Khalid Mahmud was seen on Youtube, but it is now made private by the uploader – probably fearing that they will be exposed. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgljl_TY-JE.

[494] *Tuĥfatu'l Muĥtāj*, 9/87; this is also mentioned by Imām Ghazālī in *Iqtiṣād* as repudiating the ijmāá.

[495] *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*, p31.

This is robbery in broad daylight; Keller misrepresents Alahazrat in the very passage he has quoted. Is it fair to misquote it first and then to suppress the context? Alahazrat said: "***this*** kind of kuffar" and Keller snipped it and said: "Whoever does not declare kufr ***of an unbeliever***" and made it generic – and then smugly disproves that it is a generic ruling. The context of this ruling can be known by the references Alahazrat has mentioned for the ruling; given below is the Arabic text from *Ĥusām*:

> وبالجملة هؤلاء الطوائف كلهم كفار مرتدون خارجون عن الإسلام بإجماع المسلمين وقد قال في البزازية والدرر والغرر والفتاوى الخيرية ومجمع الأنهر والدر المختار وغيرها من معتمدات الأسفار في مثل هؤلاء الكفار: من شك في كفره وعذابه فقد كفر* وقال في الشفا الشريف ونكفر من لم يكفر من دان بغير ملة الإسلام من الملل أو وقف فيهم أو شك

Keller mentions an example of a ruling to prove that it is a restricted case – even though Alahazrat has already mentioned the same, in its correct form[496] in that very quote. Very few readers of Keller's article will ever refer *Ĥusām*; what most people will interpret is that Alahazrat did not realise that "whoever doubts in the kufr of ***such*** kāfirs" is a restricted case; and therefore it does not apply for all kāfirs, as pointed out by Keller, who presents himself as more smarter and perspicuous – "look at the attention to detail of this shaykh from Kharabshahar..."

Who are "kuffar of this kind" classed by Ĥanafī jurists as mentioned in *Ĥusām*? In *Bazzāziyyah, Durar wa'l Ghurar, Fatāwā Khayriyyah, Durr al-Mukhtār*:

> Khaṭṭābi said: I do not know of any Muslim who has argued against execution, when the blasphemer is a Muslim. Saĥnūn al-Mālikī said that there is a unanimous agreement among scholars that the blasphemer of the Prophet ﷺ is a kāfir and he shall be executed; whoever doubts in the punishment and kufr of such a person is himself a kāfir.[497]

Additionally, in *Fatāwā Khayriyyah*:

> We say that even if a person disrespects the Prophet in a state of inebriation, he will not be excused and will be executed under statutory punishment.

Alahazrat is talking about blasphemers, and the ruling concerning one who insults the Prophet ﷺ.

> that whoever does not declare the *kufr* of an unbeliever—here meaning the Deobandis—himself becomes an unbeliever, this is the Islamic legal ruling *only in certain cases* of uncontestably certain kufr...

It is hard to believe that such stupid comments require refutation; even an average student of Islamic Law may be embarrassed to say such a thing. Notice the dishonesty of Keller who cleverly omits that such an injunction was stated in the context of someone insulting the Prophet ﷺ.

> Muĥammad ibn Saĥnūn said that scholars are in unanimous agreement that the blasphemer of the Prophet ﷺ and his denigrator is an apostate. Allāh's promise of torment for such a person is ordained. The punishment for such a person in our nation is execution. **Whosoever doubts in his apostasy and that he [the blasphemer] will be punished has himself become an apostate**.[498]

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[496] Vide *Shifā*, on those who do not accept or doubt in the kufr of other religions.

[497] *Fatāwā Bazzāziyyah*, 6/322; *Durar al-Ĥukkām fi Sharĥi Ghurar al-Aĥkām*, 1/300; *Fatāwā al-Khayriyyah*, 1/109; *Durr al-Mukhtār*, p345.

[498] *Shifā*, p356.

قال محمد بن سحنون أجمع العلماء أن شاتم النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم المنتقص له كافر
والوعيد جارعليه بعذاب الله له وحكمه عند الأمة القتل ومن شك في كفره وعذابه فقد كفر

This is cited by numerous scholars from the time of Ibn Saĥnūn – the third century – until our time and it shall continue irrespective of *jāhil* sufis and preachers claiming otherwise.

this is the Islamic legal ruling only in certain cases of uncontestably certain kufr, such as followers of other faiths, who explicitly deny the messengerhood of the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace), not in all cases.

Thus, if a person considers Qādiyānīs as Muslims, he remains a Muslim; perhaps Hamza Yūsuf Hanson was inspired by this Kellerian fatwā and Ţāhir Jhāngvī may use this as proof for his love of Christians and Jews, whom he does not consider kāfirs, in full alignment with the ***Common Word***[499] to which Keller is also a signatory. We seek Allāh's refuge from the evil of ignoramuses strutting as scholars. Qādiyānīs do not deny the messengerhood of our Prophet ﷺ; and if Keller does not consider Qādiyānīs kāfir, he will still remain a true Muslim, a waliy and a shādhili. *lā ĥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*.

Imam Ghazali gives the details in his *al-Iqtisad fi al-i'tiqad*, in a passage we shall translate in the future in an essay on "the fallacy that not declaring another's unbelief is unbelief."

Hopefully, in that essay he will discuss comments of Imām Muĥammad ibn Saĥnūn and an overwhelming majority of scholars, faithfully and without any distortion; and he will also address the comments of Ghazālī concerning the ta'wīl of *khātam al-nabiyyīn*.

To conclude, the Barelwi response to the Deobandis was probably far worse than the initial provocation, raising for the first time in Indian history the banner of *takfir* of one major group of Hanafi Muslims by another.

These are more lies and a caricature of history. The banner of *takfīr* was not raised by Sunnis (whom Keller and others call Barelwis) but Ismāýīl Dihlawī, the grand imām of Wahābī-Deobandi groups, who went even further than Shaykh Najdi of Arabia and it was his book, *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān* which set the fire of sectarianism in the subcontinent. It is so noxious that even a bowdlerised version of Abu'l Ĥasan Nadawi could not camouflage its odiousness. Keller inanely repeats the same lies. Moreover, Alahazrat was not the first to make takfīr of these people – many scholars had made takfīr of the blasphemers among Indian Wahābīs. Nonetheless, Alahazrat was the most cautious in takfīr, but Keller levels this slanderous charge at him – does Keller have no fear of Allāh táālā? Does he think that he can get away with this slander in the presence of *Al-Ázīz al-Qahhār, al-Muntaqim al-Jabbār*?

وَسَيَعْلَمُ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوٓاْ أَيَّ مُنقَلَبٍ يَنقَلِبُونَ

The oppressors shall soon know, to which place they shall be returned to [500]

[499] Common Word is a modern initiative with a perennialist agenda. http://www.acommonword.com/

[500] Sūrah Shuárā'a, 26:227.

Keller makes such an accusation on the imām who withheld from the takfīr of Ismāýīl Dihlawī, whose book *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān* has such horrendous statements, that even the Devil himself may hesitate to utter; but still, there was a rumour afloat that Ismāýīl had repented from his heresies and upon this rumour Alahazrat withheld from takfīr, as he has said in *Sall al-Suyūf al-Hindiyyah* (1316):

> This is the ruling of fiqh scholars concerning these mendacious statements;[501] but may Allāh shower countless blessings and mercies upon our scholars for their restraint. In spite of seeing and hearing the leader of this sect declare true Muslims as polytheists and disbelievers – neither does intense anger loosen their grip of caution; nor are they instigated by the desire for retribution; these blessed scholars[502] have reservation in ruling him kāfir and assert that there is a difference between that which *necessitates* kufr and that which *necessarily* imposes kufr.[503] It is one thing for such statements to be classified as kufr; and an entirely different thing to consider a person who has said that as a kāfir. We shall tread with utmost caution; we shall remain silent – and as long as there is a weak or even the remotest possibility to withhold from takfīr, we shall do so; we shall hesitate and fear to issue the ruling of kufr.

In *Kawkabah al-Shihābiyyah*, written in 1312, he says:

> In my opinion, the state of utmost caution bids us to withhold our tongue from declaring him as kāfir; and this is the preferred and most suitable opinion.[504] And Allāh táālā knows best.

Even the Deobandi followers of Ismayil were not ruled kāfir in 1307 for *imkān al-kadhib*:

> I seek Allāh's refuge – and a thousand times: *ĥāshā lillāh*! I certainly do not like to make takfīr of these people. Even until now, I still consider these followers[505] and modern claimants[506] as Muslims, even though there is no doubt in their heresy and waywardness. Neither do I issue a ruling of kufr upon the leader of their sect, Ismāýīl Dihlawī; because our Prophet ﷺ has warned us from making takfīr of those who say: 'lā ilāha illā Allāh'. **We do not rule them kāfir, as long as we do not have proof as obvious and glaringly apparent as the mid-day sun**; and [withhold from takfīr] until the remotest possibility remains to absolve them from kufr. For Islām shall prevail and it cannot be subdued.[507]

In yet another treatise, *Izālatu'l Áār,* written in 1317:

> We prefer the opinion of Kalām scholars in these matters. And thus, do not do takfīr of a person as long as he does not deny or reject any necessary aspect of religion; nor considers such a denier to be a Muslim.

Keller's traducement is nothing new; Deobandis have been doing this for ages, which was pointed out by Alahazrat himself:

> They use the only pretext that remains for them to draw a veil on the disbelief of those who insult Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ; they keep repeating this constantly in the hope that unsuspecting common folk are brainwashed into believing that scholars of Ahlu's Sunnah have this habit of making takfīr needlessly and

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[501] of Ismāýīl Dihlawī in his books *Tafwiyatu'l Imān* et al.

[502] See *Mútaqad/Mustanad.*

[503] *luzūm-e-kufr* and *iltizām-e-kufr.*

[504] *hamāre nazdīk maqām e iĥtiyāt meiñ ikfār sey kaff-e-lisān ma'khūz o mukhtār... Kawkabah al-Shihābiyyah,* p62.

[505] Of Ismāýīl; that is Gangohī, Ambethwī and other Deobandi followers.

[506] Modern claimants of the dead and buried idea of *imkān al-kadhib*.

[507] *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ*, p90; written in 1307 and was first published in 1309.

carelessly; and they must have ruled these blasphemers as kāfir in the same way. O Muslims! Where do these slanderers have proof that we carelessly accuse them of kufr? And where can there be a proof for a figment of imagination?[508]

The sad irony in this was that the greatest Wahhabi *bid'a* of all, takfir of fellow Muslims, was unleashed in India by denunciations of "Wahhabism."

It is safe to assume that Keller does not know Urdu; his mediocre essay indicates that he does not understand Arabic properly, but does he need to be told what 'irony' means? If something looks like a crow and caws like a crow, it might be a crow.

In reality, the sad irony is that Keller blames Alahazrat and Sunnis for takfīr, despite the fact that Deobandis ***are*** Wahābīs, and their elders began to make polytheists of common Muslims for practices accepted by scholars and sufis; they diminished the stature and respect of RasūlAllāh ﷺ to that of common things – respect him only as much as you would respect your elder brother, they said. When Alahazrat made takfīr of FOUR of their leaders, BECAUSE they committed explicit blasphemy, he has '*unleashed the bidáh of takfīr in India*'. One can easily decide whether Deobandis are Wahābī and takfiri by answering these questions:

1. Ismāýīl Dihlawī is respected and revered by Deobandis; and his book *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān* is held in great esteem – Rashīd Gangohī praised it and insisted that every word in that book is truth and should be followed. Abu'l Ĥasan Nadawi translated it into Arabic and praised it lavishly in the preface. Is this true or not?
2. This book claims that
    a. Polytheism is widespread and very few people are true Muslims in our time.
    b. It is polytheism to seek intercession from saints and prophets, including RasūlAllāh ﷺ, even if one believes that they are not equal to Allāh and are the slaves of Allāh.
    c. It is polytheism to respect graves of saints and prophets and seek blessings from them.
    d. It is polytheism to believe that RasūlAllāh ﷺ was given knowledge of the unseen, even if one believes that RasūlAllāh ﷺ was given this knowledge by Allāh táālā.
    e. It is polytheism to respect the forest around the city of the Prophet ﷺ and to deem it as a sanctuary.
    f. A number of things are slammed as polytheism – rather, he rejects any exception, even though such things are mentioned in the Book and sunnah.[509]

    We can give evidence from this book; are these quotes present in the book or not?

[508] *Tamhīd e Īmān*, 1326 AH.

[509] Many scholars have refuted *Tafwiyatu'l Īmān* and highlighted that it would then necessitate that the Qur'ān and Ĥadīth teach polytheism – *al-íyādhu billāh*. Also, Ismāýīl has himself acknowledged that he has called things as major polytheism [*shirk akbar*] even when they are not [*Arwāĥ Thalāthah*].

3. Some Deobandis – doing *taqiyyah* like *rawāfiḍ* – claim that the wording is harsh but the meaning was something else; but Ismāýīl himself in the same book rejected any interpretations:

    a. He said: words should be taken literally and at face value; claims of interpretations are inadmissible.

    b. He said: Qur'ān and Ĥadīth are easy to understand for everybody and it is a folly to think that it requires a lot of knowledge. If Qur'ān and Ĥadīth can be understood by everybody without interpretation of scholars, why should his book require interpretation?

4. Rashīd Gangohī said that it is polytheism to believe that the Prophet can hear it when one says, "O Prophet" in *tashahhud*. This makes takfīr of numerous Awliyā'a and Sufis. Is this present in the fatwā of Gangohī or not?

5. Has any prominent Deobandi written any book refuting Wahābīs?

6. Has any prominent Deobandi written any book defending Mawlid as a praiseworthy practice and refuted those who call it a reprehensible bidáh?

7. Has any prominent Deobandi written any book defending tawassul of prophets and refuted those who call tawassul as shirk?

8. Has any prominent Deobandi written any book defending istighātha, istiáānah, istimdād and refuted those who call it shirk?

9. Has any prominent Deobandi written any book or fatwā defending the practice of seeking intercession by addressing the Prophet as "Ya RasūlAllāh"?

10. When asked about those who prohibit travelling to visit RasūlAllāh ﷺ and the intention should be to visit the masjid, Rashīd Gangohī was evasive, and said that there is a scholarly difference of opinion – and both parties are from Ahl as-Sunnah; that he himself does not have an opinion on the matter;[510] earlier Ismāýīl had ruled that undertaking such a journey is polytheism.

Deobandis may follow the Ĥanafī madh'hab, but they are Wahābīs without any doubt – additionally, Deobandi leaders also committed blasphemy. Ismāýīl Dihlawī's book is an adaptation of Ibn Ábd al-Wahhāb's work even if Deobandis deny it – this was described by his own cousin, Shāh Makhṣūṣullāh Dihlawī; Mawlānā Abu'l Ĥasan Zayd Faruqi al-Dihlawī made a critical analysis of both books. According to Mawlānā Zayd, an abridged version of *Kitāb al-Tawĥīd* was sent to Mecca and other cities in 1221 AH; he quotes from a manuscript in his possession of that age, in his book, *Ismāýīl Dihlawī and his Taqwiyatu'l Īmān*. Shāh Fadl al-Rasul Badāyūnī has also cited the same booklet in his *Sayf al-Jabbār* (1260 AH). A quick comparison of topics is shown below:

[510] *Fatāwā Rashidiyyah*, 1/49-50.

Risālah Shaykh Najdi	Taqwiyatu'l Īmān
Chapter One : Refuting Polytheism has Five Sections	**Chapter One: Describing Tawĥīd and the Evil of Polytheism** has Five Sections
Section One: The reality of polytheism; its ugliness and its categories No. of verses cited: **7**	**Section One:** Refraining from polytheism No. of verses cited: **5**
Section Two: Refutation of polytheism concerning knowledge No. of verses cited: **6**	**Section Two:** Refutation of polytheism concerning knowledge No. of verses cited: **3**
Section Three: Refutation of polytheism concerning dispensation [*taşarruf*] No. of verses cited: **6**	**Section Three:** Refutation of polytheism concerning dispensation [*taşarruf*] No. of verses cited: **5**
Section Four: Refutation of polytheism in worship [*íbādah*] No. of verses cited: **5**	**Section Four:** Refutation of polytheism in worship [*íbādah*] No. of verses cited: **6**
Section Five: Refutation of polytheism in habits [*áādah*] No. of verses cited: **3**	**Section Five:** Refutation of polytheism in habits [*áādah*] No. of verses cited: **6**

According to Mawlānā Zayd,[511] Ismāýīl has used, mostly the same verses presented as evidence by Shaykh Najdi. Even if the abridged version is unavailable, these ideas and beliefs are certainly present in the writings of Muĥammad ibn Ábd al-Wahhāb, particularly in his major work *Kitāb al-Tawĥīd* and similar ideas and beliefs can be found in *Tafwiyat* of Ismāýīl. We have seen earlier that Rashīd Aĥmad Gangohī considers this book as faith, in essence, and he has said about Ibn Ábd al-Wahhāb:

> **Question:** Who are Wahābīs? What were the beliefs of Ábd al-Wahhāb Najdi, and what was his madh'hab? What kind of a man was he? What are the differences between the beliefs of Najdi folk and Sunni-Ĥanafī folk?
>
> **Answer:** The followers of Muĥammad ibn Ábd al-Wahhāb are known as Wahābīs. Their beliefs were excellent and their madh'hab was Ĥanbalī. Although, his manner was harsh, but he and his followers are good people – except those who exceeded boundaries and who have become corrupted. The beliefs [*áqāýid*] of all are the same – in actions, the differences are like that of Ĥanafī, Shāfiýī, Mālikī and Ĥanbalī.[512]

[511] I have not seen this particular abridged edition of *Kitāb al-Tawĥīd* myself, to corroborate the quotes; here, I cite on the authority of Shaykh Abu'l Ĥasan Zayd al-Azhari. The shaykh belongs to a famous scholarly family – and a descendant of Mujaddid Imām Rabbani Aĥmed Sirhindi and the son of Shāh Abu'l Khayr.

[512] *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah*, p8.

Rashīd Aĥmad Gangohī deemed the beliefs of Shaykh Najdi and his followers as excellent – *úmdah,* incidentally, the same description he has used for Ismāýīl Dihlawī and his beliefs. There is another fatwā in which Gangohī says that he does not know the beliefs of Muĥammad ibn Ábd al-Wahhāb:

> ...I do not know the state of the beliefs of Muĥammad ibn Ábd al-Wahhāb. [513]

In that fatwā however, he insists that "one should put into practice everything that is said in *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān,*" after affirming that Ismāýīl never repented or retracted from any issue in the book. Khalīl Aĥmad praised Wahābīs and backtracked from his comments in *Muhannad* – conveniently after Wahābīs seized the Ĥijāz.[514] But Keller is blind to all this – according to Deobandi fatawā Keller and his shaykhs may themselves become kāfir, but he deems them sinless – and because Alahazrat made takfīr of those who insulted RasūlAllāh ﷺ Keller accuses him of inaugurating the bidáh of takfīr in India!

> Ahmad Reza's fatwas depicted his opponents as "Wahhabi sects," which his latter-day followers came to declare all Deobandis to belong to through a sort of "guilt by association."

Reading this apology brings to mind the Bush-era White House spokesman, Ari Fleischer and his press releases. Keller tries hard to prove that Deobandis have no relation to Wahābīs, whereas everybody in the subcontinent knows who they are; Gangohī praised the founder of Wahābī heresy and his beliefs; his own fatāwā are in line with Wahābī beliefs as noted by Manżūr Númānī.

	Issue	Wahābī	Deobandi
1	Celebration of Mawlid	Bidáh	Bidáh Impermissible in any form
2	Tawassul of Awliyā'a / Prophets	Bidáh, Shirk	Bidáh, Shirk according to elders Modern muftīs slightly differ
3	Visiting graves and seeking barakah of saints	Shirk	Bidáh, Forbidden and shirk according to Ismāýīl, the big brother.
4	Visiting the Tomb of RasūlAllāh ﷺ	Bidáh, Shirk	Bidáh, Shirk according to Ismāýīl Gangohī gave an equivocal answer
5	Seeking intercession for Aid (istighātha, istiáānah)	Shirk	Shirk
6	RasūlAllāh ﷺ was given partial knowledge of unseen	Shirk	Shirk

[513] *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah*, p64.

[514] Manżūr Númānī says [dated 2nd July, 1978] that Khalīl was influenced by propaganda, and when he learnt the 'truth,' he became an admirer; see p21 of *Shaykh Muĥammad ibn Ábd al-Wahhāb aur Hindustan ke Úlamā.* Thanks to Aqdas and the brother on sunnaforum for the tip: http://tinyurl.com/p7bsvqo is a fatwā from Deoband included here just before finalising the draft. The truth is that Khalīl Aĥmed did *taqiyyah* in 1325 to gain favour for his *Muhannad.* Manżūr Númānī's apology is big fat lie, because Wahābīs were well-known and their grandshaykh Gangohi was already an admirer of Shaykh Najdi.

	Issue	Wahābī	Deobandi
7	Seeking intercession of Awliyā'a by addressing them; as in *Yā Ĥusayn*!	Shirk	Shirk
8	Life of the Prophet in his blessed grave	Not *real* life; in transient state prior to resurrection. *Ĥayāt barzakhiyyah*	Ismāýīl claimed that he ﷺ is dead and has become dust (*al-íyādhu billāh*) Deobandis like Thānawī claim *Ĥayat barzakhiyah;* and some later ones agree with Sunni belief.
9	Recitation of *Şalāt al-Tājiyyah* etc Dalayil al-Khayrat and other such litanies	*Dalayil al-Khayrat* is Shirk	***Şalāt Tajiyyah*** is *shirk* according to Thānawī and Gangohī because it contains the description "Remover of Affliction," for RasūlAllāh ﷺ which according to them is polytheism
10	Taqlīd of Madh'habs	They claim to be Hanbalis But Shaykh Najdi has deplored *taqlīd*	Ismāýīl Dihlawī deplored taqlīd and termed it shirk; Gangohī was tolerant and said: "they too act upon Ĥadīth". Modern Deobandis, however are militant against lā-madh'habis
11	Anthropomorphism	Shaykh Najdi was a follower of Ibn Taymiyyah	Ismāýīl wrote that it is bidáh to believe that Allāh táālā is transcendent from direction
12	Status of RasūlAllāh ﷺ	Human like any of us	Respect him ﷺ only as you would respect your elder brother. His ﷺ superiority is only as much as superiority is due to a village headman He ﷺ is not aware of his own fate The status of anybody in the presence of Allāh is lower than that of a cobbler He ﷺ does not have the knowledge of the terresterial realm, but Satan does If knowledge of unseen is attributed to him ﷺ, there is

	Issue	Wahābī	Deobandi
			nothing special – because, such knowledge is also possessed by madmen and beasts.

Keller burns more strawmen:

> which is also why a Muslim's membership in a particular group or sect is not legal evidence that he is a *kafir* even when the tenets of the group include ideas that are *kufr*.

In his blind love of Deobandis, Keller has resolved to diligently avoid telling the whole truth. After making such a big blunder attributing a false position to Imām Subkī, he now translates an unrelated fatwā shoving all nuances, contexts, specific/generic cases over the cliff.

For example, if a Rāfiḍī believes that the Archangel Jibrīl made a mistake in delivering the Revelation, he is certainly a kāfir; a number of such examples are found in books of fiqh. Deobandis elders were ruled kāfir for insulting statements about RasulAllah ﷺ. Our úlamā clearly wrote that only those who do not consider a blasphemer as a kāfir, after learning about their blasphemy is also a kāfir. This is *ijmāá* and famously attributed to Saĥnūn, an imām of the righteous age; ravings of a 15th century convert cannot overrule that ijmāá.

> While the fallacy of guilt by association is by no means rare in our times, one the most extreme examples is provided by the following fatwa, published in the contemporary monthly magazine *Kanz al-Iman* in Delhi, India, from a work by the Barelvi muftī Jalal al-Din Ahmad Amjadi

Keller relies on his disciple Faraz Rabbani for translation of a fatwā to cite an 'extreme' case. There are a number of fatāwā – even by Alahazrat on similar cases – but Faraz was probably[515] tasked to fish out an 'extreme' case. So find he did; however, for some reason, the issue number or the month/year of that magazine was missed in references, so it is difficult to verify the accuracy of the translation. Keller cites two paragraphs – of course, translated by Faraz:

> In the case being asked about, the marriage of Zaid, a man of sound Sunni beliefs, to the daughter of a Deobandi is absolutely impermissible (hargiz nahin ho sakta). If she wants to become a Sunni, then if she and her entire household do so and it is then seen in two or three years that they are firm on the way of Ahl al-Sunna, then it would be permitted for Zaid to marry her. Otherwise, it would not be permitted.
>
> It is absolutely not possible to permit marriage based on the deceptive words of someone who is legally an apostate. Otherwise, their very faith may be lifted [taken away from them]. If they go ahead, this would not affect Islam and the Sunna in any way. Rather, the person would be ruining his own life, and becoming of the people of hell (jahannami ho jayen ge)

[515] It is natural to assume that Faraz fished out a fatwā and translated it for him, because Keller is unable to read Urdu.

Incidentally, a similar fatwā – almost all of it is identical – is found in the fatwā collection of Muftī Jalāluddīn Aĥmad Amjadi, *Fatāwā e Faqih e Millat*, 1/434, published in 2005. The Urdu fatwā in its entirety is included in Appendix D for those who wish to compare it with Faraz's translation.

It is quite possible that some lines were missed in the version Faraz has translated from, and he can set the record right by mentioning the month/year of the magazine. Or, if he has skipped a few lines, he should have mentioned that it is an excerpt or indicated that selected portions have been translated; or used an ellipsis to indicate partial citation. Keller criticises that fatwā (in Faraz's translation) thus:

> It suffices as to its worth to reflect that according to this, a Hanafi Muslim man may marry a Jewish or Christian woman, but not a Hanafi Muslim woman from a Deobandi family, even if she rejects the Deobandi positions upon which the Barelvi's mistaken *takfir* of them is based. The woman is supposed to be ineligible for marriage because of her mere association with Deobandis, and moreover remains guilty until proven innocent.

In an identical fatwā, Muftī Jalāluddīn has explained why he does not permit the marriage:

> Deobandis are apostates due to the absolute kufr [*kufriyyāt e qaţýiyyah*] in their books, *Ĥifz al-Īmān* p8, *Taĥdhīr al-Nās* p3-14-128, *Barāhin e Qaţiáh* p51; and according to the fatwā *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*. It is absolutely impermissible to marry an apostate. In *Fatāwā Hindiyyah*, published in Egypt, 1/282: "It is not permitted for an apostate to marry either an apostate woman, nor a Muslim woman, nor an originally disbeliever woman; similarly an apostate woman cannot marry anyone; thus it is mentioned in *Mabsūţ*."
>
> Therefore, the Sunni with correct áqīdah cannot marry the daughter of a Deobandi even if she is ready to become a Sunni because, Deobandis use such opportunities and become Sunnis outwardly, but they remain steadfast on their madh'hab; after a few days, they will convert these [newer] relatives and make them Deobandis.
>
> Yes, if the family of the girl are also ready to become Sunni, they will be observed for 2-3 years whether they remain on Sunni faith; when it is firmly established – then one can marry [the girl]. This is similar to a drunkard who does tawbah – nobody makes him an imām immediately after his tawbah, but he shall be observed for a few days. In *Fatāwā Hindiyyah* and *Fatāwā Ridawiyyah* 3/213: "When a fāsiq repents, his testimony is not accepted until a period passes and it is evident that his repentance is indeed genuine."

The reason for his fatwā is obvious from the above explanation; and only in the absence of this justification can Keller exult in his threnody. Keller may disagree with the premise that Deobandis are apostates, but if that premise is assumed to be true, this fatwā is perfectly reasonable and not a travesty, as Keller makes it to be, and laments that it is a 'social problem'.

> It suffices as to its worth to reflect that according to this, a Hanafi Muslim man may marry a Jewish or Christian woman, but not a Hanafi Muslim woman from a Deobandi family,

It is futile to complain about the comprehension of this man who is blind to everything except one thing that he keeps repeating as his mantra: "Barelvi *takfīr* is mistaken".

> This is not a fatwa, but a social problem.

Is it fair to generalise the subcontinent on the basis of a fatwā – Keller is not content with describing it as even a problem with a muftī or a class of people – no, it is a social problem. Those who decry *mawlid*, *istighātha, istiáānah, istimdād* and other practices as bidáh and shirk, thereby dissenting from Ahl as-Sunnah is not a problem; but refuting blasphemers is a social problem. In fact, there are many fatāwā of the same muftī on the same subject – and the general consensus among Sunni scholars: if someone is unaware of the blasphemies of Deobandi elders, he will not become an apostate. We have seen above that we do not deem Wahābīs as apostates.

> The above fatwa is but an example.

The above fatwā is a bad example – assuming that Faraz has faithfully cited it from some magazine. In fact, there are a number of fatāwā on the same topic by the same Muftī Jalāluddīn Amjadi that acknowledge that a person becomes kāfir only if he respects blasphemers after learning about the blasphemy of such folk. For example about a person who goes about in Tabligh Jamaat, he says:

> If the aforementioned boy is certainly unaware of the blasphemies of Deobandis, but his ways are that of Wahābīs – he is deemed misguided and heretic. In this case, the Nikāĥ of the girl is valid but it is not permitted for the girl to maintain marital relations and she should obtain a divorce by any means possible.[516]

It is clear that the muftī's ruling is based on blasphemies of Deobandis, and *ijmāá* as cited by Ibn Saĥnūn:

> Whosoever doubts in his apostasy and his punishment has himself become an apostate

Notice that he does not consider the boy as an apostate if he is unaware of those blasphemies – and deems him like other 'Wahābīs' whom he does not consider apostates either, but only misguided heretics. Keller pointedly ignores these premises on which Sunni úlamā make takfīr of blasphemers because his litany of complaints becomes irrelevant. In a fatwā of Mawlānā Amjad Álī, dated 1324:

> If the person is indeed a Wahābī and also professes those beliefs which are kufr; or deems the leaders of Wahābīs as Muslims – those whom the scholars of Ĥaramayn have ruled apostates; if the person knows about and is aware of their blasphemous statements, and still considers them as leaders and Muslims, then this person also becomes an apostate like them.[517]

Such fatāwā are not new; concerning marriage with deniers of destiny, Álī al-Qārī has said:

> Mālik {**was consulted**} concerning {**marriage with a Qadariyy**[518] **and he said, do not marry him**} this could either mean it was disliked or forbidden – which is agreed by all scholars in the case of a woman because of her weak mind and that she would incline toward the madh'hab of her husband; and it may also mean that it is invalid based on the takfīr of such a person [Qadariyy].[519]

Notice, that marriage to a Qadariyy was disallowed on the basis of his *takfīr,* which Álī al-Qārī acknowledges as a matter of ijtihād. Instead of restricting his comment to this aspect, which he has anyway declared a mistake,

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[516] *Fatāwā Fayđ al-Rasūl*, 1/616.

[517] *Fatāwā Amjadiyyah*, 2/56. The author of this fatwā is a disciple of Imām Ahmed Riđā Khān and the author of *Bahār e Sharīát,* the famous compendium of Ĥanafī fiqh in Urdu.

[518] Those who deny destiny – *qadar*.

[519] *Sharĥ al-Shifā*, Álī al-Qārī, 2/494.

Keller unjustly accuses these muftīs of hatred, jealousy and other motives. We end this chapter with a fatwā[520] by Alahazrat which explains the general bases for Deobandi takfīr:

> **Question #1**: Are all scholars of Deoband certainly kāfir? Those who do not consider them kāfir – are they kāfir too?
>
> **Answer #1**: Undoubtedly, they are all disbelievers. Those who are informed of their [blasphemous] statements and still do not consider them as kāfirs are also kāfirs. The scholars of Ĥaramayn have unanimously said concerning them: "he who doubts in their kufr and punishment has also committed kufr".
>
> ⁓
>
> **Question #2**: Scholars of Deoband say that our áqīdah is not that which is attributed to us [by Sunnis]; rather, we too consider a person who holds such beliefs as kāfir. Can this be deemed a legal excuse [*ĥīlah sharýī*]? Furthermore, they make *ta'wīl* of the statements in *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān* etc. and show inoffensive meanings; what is the ruling concerning such scholars in the sharīáh and is it permissible to pray behind them? These people also believe in *imkān kadhib* [of Allāh táālā] and confirm that one who does not believe in imkān kadhib is a kāfir – what is the ruling concerning them? Do we have to repeat all those prayers we have prayed in their lead?
>
> **Answer #2**: Allāh táālā has said: ***They swear by Allāh that they have never said [blasphemies] But surely, they have uttered words of disbelief and have become disbelievers after professing Islām.***[521]
>
> This is not a legal refuge, but the devil's subterfuge, and this excuse cannot be accepted. Those accursed beliefs and statements are present in their [Deobandi] books and they remain steadfast upon them until now; and they are reprinting them again and again – these excuses are only to assuage those who are unaware. For those who know about these things but are not scholars, they have another excuse: those statements mean something else. And if it is a knowledgeable person, their excuses are like – run away from Rangoon and reach Calcutta; when pursued there, fly away to somewhere else. In front of scholars, their excuse is: "I am ignorant in this skill [of debate]; my teachers were also ignorant of such things and even if you convince me, I will keep saying the same thing." Those who deem Taqwiyatu'l Īmān as a good book or those who make takfīr of people who do not believe in imkān kadhib – there are more than 70 reasons which necessitate kufr on such a person which are explained in detail in *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ, Kawkabah al-Shihābiyyah, Kashf e Zalāl e Deoband: Sharĥ al-Istimdād*, etc. Prayer behind such a person is invalid and those prayed earlier have to be repeated; if one does not repeat it, it is sin and transgression [fisq].
>
> ⁓
>
> **Question #3**: Those people who are neither scholars themselves, nor are they graduates of Deoband, nor do they have any relation with them or revere them as shaykhs [*baýat o áqīdat*]; but they do not call them kāfir only due to their ignorance of Islamic creed [*áqāýid*] – nor do they themselves believe in such things that necessitate takfīr. Is it permissible to pray behind them, or should one pray separately, even if alone? Concerning the *ĥāfiż* and *imām* in the Mosque who consider *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān* and other such books as bad; nor do they themselves profess corrupt beliefs – but they only do not consider Deobandi scholars as kāfirs and pray behind them; are these people kāfir too and should they be shunned from leading prayers?
>
> **Answer #3**: This is probably about a hypothetical case which cannot be real. The blasphemous beliefs of Deobandis are well-known; those who deny it, do so to save their skin and say: "We do not know of these things." Tell them to look into fatāwā which are published, so they can learn about disbelief of kāfirs – and safeguard yourselves from being deceived and destroy your worship. It is obligatory to bear enmity with the enemies of RasūlAllāh ﷺ; if you are steadfast on this obligation, they will say: 'we don't have to see any books.'

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[520] *Fatāwā Riđawiyyah*, 21/283-285. Queries #145 to #149, 8 Dhi'l Qádah 1338.

[521] Sūrah Tawbah, 9:74.

This is their deception. If they had the reverence of Muĥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ in their hearts, they would have themselves stayed away from those who are known to have disrespected him; they would be restless to investigate and ascertain the truth.

Suppose if I tell someone: “there is a man waiting in ambush to murder you; if you do not believe me, come I will show you,” will he say that he is not interested in learning about it, nor will he heed any warning? These people are a cunning sort and covertly, they are with them or simply uninterested in religious matters. It is obligatory to avoid praying behind such people. Yes, however, if there is indeed someone who has certainly not heard of these [blasphemies], such as a newcomer or utterly ignorant person [*nirā jāhil*] or a person unaware and because of his lack of knowledge about [these blasphemies] does not consider them kāfir – they are excused until they are apprised of these things and when explained, they accept it readily.

VII. VINDICATING ALAHAZRAT

Muĥammad ibn al-Munkadir reports from Jābir[522] that RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: When the later ones of this nation vilify the former ones, whoever has knowledge should demonstrate it; verily, the concealer of knowledge on that day is similar to one who conceals that which has been revealed to Muĥammad ﷺ.

Praise be to Allāh who perfected this religion and made it complete; and ordained for it scholars, who are leaders to be followed; He bestowed upon them conviction and insight, untouched by uncertainty and doubt; He granted them profound understanding and discerning; thus they were designated to explain and elucidate, to clarify and illuminate those who are perplexed on matters intricate, and seek a keen understanding; when the gathered clouds of falsehood began pouring after hovering above – and the bazaars of heresy were flourishing, when the Mútazilīs deviated from the moderate path and brazenly repudiated the true Sunni faith; and when they attributed to the Lord Almighty which He has negated himself;[523] came the imām who was tough on heretics and his mission was to repudiate them – indeed, he was the most prominent and vehement in refutation, and was their fiercest opponent; he wielded a pointed spear and brandished a sharp sword; and he smote their hearts, enervated their purpose and established solid proofs in favour of Ahl as-Sunnah...

When he silenced heretics with clarifications and proofs, and they could not face him, they shot back by heaping upon him false accusations and saying things about him which are not permissible to say about any Muslim.[524]

When heretics could not answer, they resorted to all kinds of lies and slander and the most common accusation was that he was hasty in *takfīr* and that he would make takfīr of anybody who did not agree with him; Keller, not only parrots the Deobandi libel, he also adds a few new accusations which are mostly in the form of insinuations. Alahazrat is presented as uninformed while Keller is sagacious and erudite. Take the opening question in Keller's article:

> Is someone who has an idea that is kufr or "unbelief" thereby an unbeliever?

Alahazrat answered this more than a hundred years ago and has indeed repeated in many of his fatāwā:

> I say: The well-researched position is what we have mentioned/indicated many times: there is a [big] difference between something that is kufr and to rule someone a kāfir because of it.[525]

In the opening section, Keller says:

> the final part of our answer shall focus upon two broad categories among the least known today of extenuating circumstances that acquit Muslims of kufr,

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[522] *Tabyin Kadhib al-Muftari*, Ibn Ásākir reports this with his chain, p42.

[523] In the original: "And they negated attributes to the Lord Almighty – Glorified is He – those attributes which He attested Himself; and they [Mútazilīs] neither attested His Attributes nor the Attribute of Speech".

[524] This is adapted from Ibn Ásākir's introduction to Imām Abu'l Ĥasan al-Ashárī in his *Tabyīn*, p38-39 and fits Imām Aĥmed Riđā with a slight alteration.

[525] Ibid, Footnote #357, p214.

We have seen what the final part is all about – though it may not be obvious, the undertone is that Sunnis do not know this principle of *luzūm* and *iltizām*, until Keller teaches them – perhaps, someone should translate this article into Urdu for the benefit of those muftīs in the subcontinent.

> They culminated in a number of fatwas published by Ahmad Reza Khan Barelwi of the takfir of major Deobandi ulema of his times

We have already explained the reasons and history of those fatāwā. One should remember that Alahazrat made takfīr of only those people who wrote and published blasphemous statements.

> Knowledge of the above principle could have probably prevented much of the "fatwa wars" that took place around the turn of the last century in India between Hanafi Muslims of the Barelwi and Deobandi

Keller's condescending attitude is most obvious in this comment notwithstanding his own ignorance. Ironically, knowledge would have probably prevented Keller from making such a comment. Alahazrat's mastery of Islamic sciences is evident from the numerous proofs he piles up as evidence for his arguments, a prime example of which is in *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ*. Scholars in the subcontinent were well-aware of principles of takfīr as well as principles of blasphemy; they were well-heeled in kalām and this is the reason why they were unfazed by hype.

> the only substantive pretext for takfir between them…
>
> …namely the charge of Ahmad Reza Khan Barelwi

It is not the 'pretext' for takfīr, but the basis of takfīr. Keller should read the attestations by scholars who also cite the same 'pretext' when agreeing with Alahazrat's takfīr. Among express statements that belittle Alahazrat is Keller's comment on Alahazrat's Arabic:

> Gangohi's concept of the *jawaz 'aqli* or "hypothetical possibility" of God's lying was mistakenly translated into Arabic by Ahmad Reza Khan as *imkan al-kadhib*, which in Arabic means the "factual possibility of [God's] lying"

Obviously, he has not seen the books of either parties which use all these terms, *imkān dhātī*, *imkān wuqūýī*, etc. The Urdu-Arabic translation expert also did not say: *jawāz áqlī* of WHAT. Suppose, he had said ***jawāz áqlī*** of ***kadhib****;* then one would be puzzled, what is the difference between *imkān* and *jawāz*? And if both are synonyms, where is the confusion that you attribute to Alahazrat? So he translated kadhib in the first term and left it untranslated in the second to make a commotion about the nuance; given below are the two terms which according to Keller are two different things:

- *jawāz áqlī of kadhib* – "hypothetical possibility of God's lying"
- *imkān al-kadhib* – "factual possibility of God's lying"

I cannot figure out which part of *imkān* means "factual," perhaps, we can find in some text that whenever *imkān* is mentioned absolutely, it means *imkān wuqūýī* by default and not *imkān dhātī*.

Whether this mistranslation was due to Ahmad Reza Khan's honest misapprehension of Gangohi's position, or directly carrying into Arabic a similar Urdu phrase without understanding the resultant nuance in Arabic, or some other reason, is not clear.

This is similar to a pedlar of glass trinkets attempting to teach diamond identification to a master diamond cutter who is famous for his skill and whose expertise is widely acknowledged and already showcased. Keller has failed to demonstrate a grasp of the concept of *jawaz wuqūýī*; in fact, he confuses basic terms and yet accuses Alahazrat of misapprehension. Shaykh Faḍl al-Rasūl has mentioned this in *Mútaqad,* written in 1270, even before Alahazrat was born:

> Similarly, it is *mustaĥīl* for Allāh táālā to be associated with falsehood and any other flaw. The Najdīs depart from Muslims at this point; their leader says: "Falsehood for Him – Glorified is He – and for him to be attributed with this flaw is not *muĥāl dhātī*;[526] nor is it precluded from Divine Power of the Almighty, because otherwise it would necessitate that the power of the human exceeds the power of the Sustainer.."
>
> One of his followers compounded it with further insolent tripe and uttered things that will not redeem him, but rather deliver him to Hell; because he [went so far as to] associate Him – Hallowed is He – with ignorance, impotence and all flaws and defects, profanities and ugliness and thus disgraced himself and his followers by manifold inanities...[527]

Let Keller translate the seven pages[528] from *Mustanad* where Alahazrat eloquently explains this 'nuance' of *imkān wuqūýī* and then demonstrate how Alahazrat has misunderstood it.[529] If he cannot, hopefully he has the decency to retract from the slander. To get him started, I have translated two relevant paragraphs that knock the teeth off Keller's toothless premise. If *Mustanad* is inaccessible[530] to Keller, then it is futile to expect him to have even attempted to learn what is in *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ.* The least he could have done – if he was just - is to have inquired whether Alahazrat had anything to say about it. Almost all informed Sunnis know that *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ* exists, even if they have not read it themselves; all Keller had to do was ask.[531] A few lines from Alahazrat's lengthy footnote are quoted below:

> Our Māturīdī imams trode the middle path and said: There is no command, except that of Allāh ﷻ; and actions can be intrinsically beautiful or ugly – whether the intellect perceives it or not. Yet, among [these actions] is that which is [obviously] concordant with wisdom,[532] such as punishing the infidel and rewarding the pious; and some which appear to be [apparently] against wisdom. Some thing may be *mumkin* in itself[533] but *muĥāl*

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[526] Essentially impossible, ***muĥāl bi'dh dhāt*** or as it is translated by Nuh Keller and others as: *intrinsically impossible.*

[527] *Mútaqad al-Muntaqad*, p61.

[528] *Mustanad*, footnote #131, pages 98-105.

[529] That is, after Keller can demonstrate that he has properly understood Alahazrat's argument. Hopefully, Keller's murids will snap out of their delusion and realise that Alahazrat is not just another scholar who merely copies from older úlamā, but an imām who can independently derive rulings in the absence of explicit opinions by elders in a specific issue.

[530] Because *Mustanad* is in Arabic and *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ* is mostly Urdu, though this particular discussion has Arabic footnotes by Alahazrat in the latter.

[531] Mostly because of the complex discussion and myriad terms which sound formidable to those unacquainted with *Kalām.*

[532] *Ĥikmah.*

[533] *mumkin dhātī.*

due to extraneous reasons. For a thing to be governed by Divine Power, it is necessary for it to be intrinsically mumkin – even if it is impossible to occur.[534] Because everything that is *mumkin dhātī* is included in the Divine Power of Allāh táālā.

Therefore we say: that whose opposite can occur and is within Divine Power of Allāh táālā, [but] impossible to occur – because it would necessitate ignorance and falsehood, which are both essentially impossible.[535] And this is associated with Divine Will upon which the possibility of its occurrence depends.[536] Because that which is impossible to exist cannot be the Will of Allāh táālā. It is also not necessary that Divine Power should concern only with that [mumkin] which has come into existence. Thus it is also valid that *mumkin dhātī* which has no possibility to occur is also governed by Divine Power contrary to Divine Will; because, existence cannot oppose it and nothing can remain [unexisting] after it has been Willed; therefore, it is impossible that Divine Will concerns that which cannot exist. If you have understood this, [you will realise] that all that is *mumkin* is in the Divine Power of Allāh táālā – regardless of whether it is concordant with wisdom or not; and therefore, there is neither compulsion nor obligation [here]. However, it is Divine Will that governs [such that] only that which agrees with wisdom is brought into existence; otherwise, it would necessitate foolishness – which is *mustaĥīl*. And that which agrees with wisdom is in the realm of that which necessarily exists.[537]

Alahazrat explains the same concept in another footnote explaining why a person becomes kāfir if he says that '*it is possible for another prophet to come after RasūlAllāh* ﷺ'[538]

That is, possibility to occur (*imkān wuqūýī*); and this is kufr because it repudiates scripture and rejects an Essential Article of Faith. If [a person] believes that it is an inherent possibility (*imkān dhātī*) there is no reason for ruling such a person kāfir – rather, it is valid to assume 'possibility' in this case. However, it is absurd that multiple 'final prophets' can exist; because, 'final' by definition means that which comes last and [the attribute] cannot be shared.

This kind of know-it-all orientalism is starkly reminiscent of Edward Lane's comments on Zabīdī:

But in comparing large portions of it with the corresponding portions of the Lisan el-`Arab, I made the unexpected discovery that, in most of the articles in the former, from three-fourths to about nine-tenths of the additions to the text of the Kamoos, and in many articles the whole of those additions, existed verbatim in the Lisan el-`Arab. I cannot, therefore, acquit the seyyid Murtada of a want of candour, and of failing to render due honour to one of the most laborious of compilers, by not stating either that the Taj el-`Aroos was mainly derived in the first instance from the Lisan el-`Arab (which I believe to have been the case) or that the contents of the former are mainly found in the latter.[539]

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[534] *imtināá al-wuqūýī.*

[535] *muĥāl dhātī.*

[536] It is a simple concept which can be easily understood by an illustration: Abū Lahab is a kāfir who will go to hell as mentioned in the Qur'ān. Now, forgiveness of Abū Lahab is intrinsically possible because, he is like any other kāfir. But the Divine Will of Allāh has decreed that he will go to hell, and this decree is made known by His Divine Speech. Therefore, pardon for Abū Lahab now becomes an impossibility of occurrence [*imtināá wuqūýī*]; if it were otherwise, it will then necessitate:

a) Ignorance: that He did not know that He will pardon him.
b) Falsehood: He knew that He would pardon, but still deliberately stated otherwise.

And both are essentially impossible.

[537] *Mustanad*, p100-101, footnote #131.

[538] *Mustanad*, p120.

[539] *An Arabic-English Lexicon in Eight Parts*, Edward William Lane, page xix.

He throws in a story he heard from 'someone' that Murtada Zabīdī was not its author and that Zabīdī stole it; all these insinuations are to discredit Zabīdī, even though Lane's own lexicon is based on Zabīdī's work:

> As the Taj el-'Aroos is the medium through which I have drawn most of the contents of my lexicon, I must morefully state the grounds upon which I determined to make so great a use of it.

Keller's criticism of Alahazrat's fatwā is wrong because it is based on false and imaginary premises; and the fact that he has not seen the fatwā himself. His comments are based on hearsay evidence:

> The fatwa's deductions are wrong because its premises are based on inaccurate observation and inattention to needful logical distinctions

> This mistaken construing of Gangohi's position in turn became the basis for Ahmad Reza's declaring that Gangohi was a kafir,

It must be noted that Alahazrat refuted this belief of *imkān kadhib* in his *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ*, but chose the path of extreme caution and said:

> Allāh táālā gives success. O Allāh, we seek Your forgiveness and beseech You to protect us from heresy and kufr. Dear brother, do you ask about the status of their belief and whether it is permissible to pray behind them? Rather you should ask about the number of reasons cited by a group of scholars who make takfīr of their leader and his followers [in this issue of *imkān kadhib*]. I seek the refuge of Allāh! I seek the refuge of Allāh a million times – I certainly do not like to make takfīr of these people; in fact, I still consider these followers and modern claimants[540] as Muslims – even though there is no doubt that they are heretics and misguided.
>
> I do not issue the ruling of the kufr on the kingpin of this group[541] either, because our Prophet ﷺ forbade us to make takfīr of those who say ***lā ilāha illā Allāh***, until the reason for their takfīr is more apparent than the mid-day sun and there remains no excuse to exempt them and deem them Muslims; because Islām shall prevail and cannot be subdued – However, I will certainly say this – and this I say with certainty – that undoubtedly, this belief necessitates kufr for a number of reasons according to one group of scholars – we seek Allāh's refuge.[542]

Keller's rehashed propaganda is obvious; even though it is kufr according to one group of scholars, Alahazrat chose the opinion of kalām scholars to withhold from takfīr. Gangohī's takfīr was due to the fatwā of *wuqūú*. Hopefully, Keller has prepared well to answer for these slanders on Judgement day.

> *Ahmad Reza and the Prophet's Knowledge of the Unseen*

Keller tries to project this as Alahazrat's own belief and apart from standard Sunni belief; therefore, he repeats a similar insinuation a number of times:

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[540] Followers of Ismāýīl and modern claimants of that ancient heresy of *imkān kadhib*.

[541] That is Ismāýīl Dihlawī who first raked up this dead Mútazilī belief.

[542] *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ*, p80, Published in 1309, written in 1307.

rebuttals of Ahmad Reza Khan's belief

let us cast a glance at Ahmad Reza Khan's prophetology

all of which Ahmad Reza Khan interpreted

By this interpretation Ahmad Reza was able to reach an accord

were understood by Ahmad Reza Khan to mean

Ahmad Reza's position is neither "against decisive scriptural texts

Alahazrat was only presenting proofs for the standard belief of Sunni scholars. Alahazrat's proofs can also be found in *Jalā'a al-Qulūb*, written by Shaykh Muhammad al-Kattānī, who is obviously not a 'Barelwi' and has quoted many Sunni úlamā who have held this belief prior to Alahazrat. Can Deobandis/Keller, or any of their followers show us any fatwā or opinion on ílm al-ghayb of Alahazrat which is not compatible with the book of Shaykh Muĥammad al-Kattānī?[543] If yes, it should then be easy to demonstrate the difference, and we invite them to show this difference. If no, then why criticise only Alahazrat? He is not just criticised but reviled, and every effort is made to demonise and project Alahazrat as having an eccentric or aberrant opinion, removed from the majority of Ahl al-Sunnah, as Keller has done above. In-shā'Allāh, we will debunk that myth and show that Alahazrat is a prominent spokesman of Ahl as-Sunnah and thus its imām of latter times; those who oppose him *are the* dissenters and misguided folk.

In summary, Imām Kattānī says[544] that according to one school, as professed by Shaykh Ábd al-Mālik al-Tajmouti and Abū'l Ábbās Ábd al-Ĥayy al-Ĥalabī, RasūlAllāh ﷺ was given encompassing knowledge [*bi'l iĥāṭah*] and he ﷺ did not leave this world, until he was given knowledge of everything; and when he was criticised, Tajmouti presented the ṣaĥīĥ ĥadīth of Ṭabarānī narrated by Úmar ؓ that he said: "I was given the keys of everything except the five" and a similar report by Ábdullāh ibn Masúūd; which proves that his ﷺ knowledge encompasses everything except the five, and later he was given the five as well. He cites Imām Suyūṭī who said:

> He was given the knowledge of everything except the five; it is also said that he was given the five as well but he was commanded to not disclose it; however the difference of opinion concerning [knowledge of the] soul is still debated…

In Ṭabarānī again from Ibn Úmar ؓ in a marfūú narration:

> Allāh táālā raised the world for me and I see it and whatever shall happen in it until Judgement day, as I see this palm of mine.

Stating the above, Kattānī says:

> The final word [in the matter] is that he ﷺ was given knowledge of everything before he departed this world and it is obvious that one who denies this is either an ignoramus or a closet heretic. And then, if I can know, what is the reason for such a denial, as this issue is not excluded from the realm of possibility?

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[543] Shaykh Muĥammad ibn Jaáfar al-Zamzamī al-Kattānī [1274-1345/1857-1957].

[544] Summarised from Imām Kattānī's *Jalā'a al-Qulūb*, 1/107-112; all unmarked citations in this section are from here.

He further says that according to the second school, such as professed by Shaykh Abū Álī Ĥasan al-Yūsī: "Encompassing knowledge of everything is only for Allāh táālā and if one holds a belief that such knowledge is equal to that of Allāh táālā, then he is a kāfir..." Shaykh Kattānī then mentions a few examples and says:

> And these are a number of prominent awliyā'a who have informed about themselves that they know what has happened and what shall happen [*mā kāna wa mā yakūn*] – [and this was] taught by Allāh táālā. Is any of us bold enough to call them something,[545] let alone make takfīr of them?

Sub'hān Allāh, if prominent awliyā'a and scholars from centuries have this belief, and indeed explicitly mentioned in ṣaĤīĤ Ĥadīth, why does Keller repeatedly refer to it as: Ahmad Reza's belief, Ahmad Reza's esoteric prophetology? Shaykh Kattānī has already said that **only a *jahil* or a *mulĤid* will deny this**. If Keller does not deny this, why does he sound so standoffish about it – why doesn't he have the courage to say, yes Ahmad Reza said it and he is not alone – the majority of Sunnis worldwide have this belief? Shaykh Yūsī[546] who was a contemporary of Tajmouti[547] said in refuting the latter:

> It is necessary to believe in the reverence of our Prophet ﷺ, and we believe that he was given knowledge and light and all the ranks of perfection which befit him, such that nobody in the universe has been given – because he is the best of all creation.

Yūsī also said, as paraphrased by Shaykh Kattānī:

> We are not expected to know this and even if we spend a lot of effort we will not be able to learn about its extensiveness; and one who tries to investigate it will either fall into denigrating the lofty rank of the Chosen One of Allāh among His creation; or say something disrespectful to Allāh that may sound as similitude with His creation.

Concerning the verses 187-88 of Sūrah Aárāf about knowledge of the hour:

> There are many similar Qur'anic verses, all of which Ahmad Reza Khan interpreted as referring to the earlier life of the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace), before Allah bestowed on him greater knowledge, until, in the final years of his life, Allah disclosed to him everything that was and everything that will be until Judgement Day. By this interpretation Ahmad Reza was able to reach an accord

This is not just 'Ahmad Reza Khān,' but many other imāms of Ahl as-Sunnah believed that RasūlAllāh ﷺ was given the knowledge of the Hour, we shall mention a few such luminaries listed by Kattānī:

> Here, particularly about this issue, we present the opinions of righteous scholars and Awliyā'a of Allāh who say that RasūlAllāh ﷺ did not depart this word until Allāh táālā had informed him of everything that was hidden from him or unclear to him from the Five and the soul etc.[548]

1. Citing Ibn Ĥajar from his *Fat'Ĥ al-Bārī*:

> Concerning the verse "***They ask you about the soul,***" Some scholars have said that this verse does not prove that Allāh táālā did not inform His Prophet ﷺ about the reality of the soul; rather it indicates that He informed

[545] Disagreeable – such as heretic, innovator etc. *al-íyādhu billāh*.

[546] Abū Álī Ĥasan ibn Masúūd al-Yūsī [1041- 1103 AH].

[547] The qāđī of Sijilmāsah, Abū Marwan Ábd al-Mālik Sijilmāsī al-Tājmoutī, passed away in 1118 AH.

[548] *Jalā'a al-Qulūb*, p194.

him ﷺ, but did not permit him to tell others; and they said similarly about "Knowledge of the Hour." Allāh táālā knows best.

2. Qasṭallāni repeated the same thing in *Irshād al-Sāri*.

3. In *Rūĥ al-Bayān* under verse 42 of Sūrah Nāziáāt,

   He knew the time of the Hour after being informed by Allāh táālā

4. In *Ṣaĥīĥ Muslim* reporting from Ĥudhayfah:

   RasūlAllāh ﷺ informed me of everything that will happen until the Hour is established.[549]

5. In *Khaṣāyiṣ al-Kubrā*, Suyūṭī said:

   Among the exclusive attributes of his ﷺ, is that he was aided by awe; and he was given concise and succinct speech; and the treasures of the earth and the knowledge of all things except Five; some have said the Five as well and [knowledge of] the soul.

6. In the same work, elsewhere:

   Some scholars are of the opinion that he ﷺ was given the Five as well and the knowledge of the hour and the soul; however, he was commanded to conceal it.

7. The gnostic Ábd al-Wahhāb al-Shárānī in *Kashf al-Ghummah*:

   And he was give the knowledge of everything – even the knowledge of the soul and the Five...

8. The gnostic Ábd al-Raĥmān ibn Muṣṭafā al-Áydarūs;

9. In *Nafaĥāt al-Qudsiyyah*, Ábdullāh al-Mīrghanī al-Ṭāyifi said:

   Research scholars have affirmed that Allāh táālā taught his Prophet, knowledge of the unseen – including the Five which were hitherto excepted – in his final years; however, he was commanded to conceal some and allowed to inform others of some

10. Shaykh Ismāýīl al-Nab'hāni;

11. Shaykh Ibrāhīm Laqqānī in his *Sharĥ Ṣaghīr* of *Jawharah al-Tawĥid*:

    Another group said: Rather Allāh táālā informed him the knowledge of the soul; but he was not commanded to inform his followers. This is the similar difference as in the knowledge of the hour. The accurate position is what has been said that verily, Allāh táālā did not take him ﷺ back until he was informed of what was unclear, but he was commanded to conceal some of these things and inform some others.

12. Ibn Ĥajar al-Haytami in *Sharĥ Hamziyyah* of Busīrī:

    Most of the kinds of knowledge possessed by our Prophet ﷺ are about the unseen; and the evidence for it is his saying: "I gained the knowledge of all before and those who come after" in a famous ĥadīth. Because Allāh táālā gave this specially to him...

The purpose of stating the above is only to prove that Alahazrat was neither the first, nor the only person to have this belief. Concerning the ĥadīth of Supreme Assembly, Keller says:

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[549] *Muslim*, #2891 Cf. *Jalā'a al-Qulūb* of Kattānī.

The words of the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) at this tremendous event, "and lo, everything was revealed to me, and I knew," **were understood by Ahmad Reza Khan** to mean just that: that the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) had been endowed with such vast knowledge of the unseen that he knew even what the Supreme Assembly of archangels were speaking about.

Not just by Ahmad 'Reza' Khan, but Ĥadīth masters who are respected and deemed as authorities by even the Wahābīs, have said the same thing. In the book *Ikhtiyār al-Awlā*, explaining the famous Ĥadīth of Supreme Assembly:

> There is evidence in this for the immense honour bestowed upon the Prophet ﷺ and his superiority because of his knowledge of what is in the heavens and the earth, and that it was disclosed to him even the debate of angels in whether in the heavens or elsewhere, just as Ibrāhīm was shown the dominion of the heavens and the earth [*malakūt al-samāwāti wa'l arḍ*]. Many *marfūú* and *mawqūf* reports confirm that he ﷺ was given [the knowledge of] everything except the keys to the Unseen Five which are exclusive to Allāh ﷻ.[550]

This is Ĥāfiż Ibn Rajab,[551] the Ĥadīth master praised by great Ĥadīth imāms such as Ibn Ĥajar al-Ásqalānī and Jalāluddīn Suyūţī; and whose unfinished *Fat'ĥ al-Bārī* is termed as a 'wonder of the age'.

was what made Ahmad Reza Khan Barelwi say that Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri had thereby demeaned and insulted the Prophet

Not just Ahmad Reza Barelwi, but a number of scholars have said the same thing about Khalīl Aĥmad's statements, notably Shaykh Aĥmad Barzanji who gave two reasons for its being kufr:

> **First Reason**: It is explicit that Iblis is more extensive in knowledge than RasūlAllāh ﷺ; this is explicit in denigrating him ﷺ.
>
> **Second Reason**: He has deemed that to establish the extensiveness of the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ as polytheism.
>
> The imāms of all the four madh'habs have written that whosoever denigrates RasūlAllāh ﷺ is a kāfir; and whosoever deems as kufr, that which is certainly faith, is also a kāfir.

But Keller does not mind such 'innuendos'

Moreover, it is difficult to see how the attribute of knowledge that Khalīl Ahmad ascribes to Satan and the Angel of Death should become "shirk" when affirmed of the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and give him peace): either it is a divine attribute that is shirk to ascribe to any creature, or it is not.

But even if we overlook these mistaken innuendos,

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[550] *Ikhtiyār al-Awlā fī Sharĥ Ĥadīth Ikhtişām al-Mala' al-Aálā*, Ĥāfiż Ibn Rajab al-Ĥanbalī, p40. Yes, Ibn Rajab does not include the Five – which is a valid difference of opinion among Sunni scholars as explained by both Kattānī and Alahazrat.

[551] Zaynuddīn Ábd al-Raĥmān Ibn Rajab al-Ĥanbalī [736-795 AH].

Alahazrat says in *Tamhid*:

> Such a person who says the above, does he not consider the accursed Iblīs as a partner to Allāh? Certainly he does; because, if anything attributed to someone in the creation is considered as shirk, then it is shirk when attributed to anyone else – because Allāh táālā has no partner. If this concept when attributed to RasūlAllāh ﷺ is considered as shirk[552]– such that there is 'no part of faith' in it – then he certainly means that it is a specific attribute that is attested only for Allāh táālā. Because, that is why, one who attests this [knowledge] for the Prophet becomes a polytheist. In which case, this person patently attests the same for Iblīs and thus considers him a partner with Allāh táālā.
>
> O Muslims! Is this not an insult to Allāh táālā and His Messenger ﷺ?

Indeed, it is an insult and an explicit insult – and an explicit insult is kufr.

> At the latter words, the fiery pen of Ahmad Reza Khan wrote his *Husam al-Haramayn*

This is only an ad-hominem comment and contributes nothing to the discussion. Certainly Imām Aĥmad Riđā's pen was fiery for heretics – nay, it was an unsheathed sword and a bolt of lightning incinerating blasphemers. If it were not for his fiery pen, blasphemers would not be making excuses for their blasphemies, as he has said himself:

> ***kilk e razā hai khañjar e khūñ-khār barq-bār***
> ***aádā se kahdo khayr manayeñ na sharr kareñ***
> Raza's pen is a bloodthirsty dagger showering thunderbolts
> Tell the enemy not to celebrate in safety, nor indulge in mischief

It is the same pen which overflows with love and devotion when praising the Beloved ﷺ. His ode of salutation – the *Salām* – is as famous in Urdu as the *Burdah* is in Arabic. But when it deals with blasphemers, it is a drawn sword – and it is the zeal for the sunnah taught by our imāms and they do not tire from refuting heretics until their last breath. Abū Álī says that Imām Abu'l Ĥasan al-Ashárī was in his lap when he breathed his last, and he heard him say: "May Allāh damn the Mútazilah, they distorted and falsified; they fabricate and they lie".[553] When Keller gets tired of false accusations, he vents his spleen:

> Now, the temperament of Ahmad Reza Khan, with his acknowledged brilliance, doubtless played a role in this judgement,

How does Keller know of the 'temperament' of Ahmad Reza? What does he mean by it? That Alahazrat was outraged at blasphemy and that he shouldn't have? Or is Keller suggesting that Alahazrat had a bad temper and when he became angry, he would make takfīr of anybody who angered him? If it is the latter, then let Keller prove how temperament had a role in this judgement. Imām Aĥmad Riđā was the epitome of the following Quranic verse; this is what he practised and this is what he preached:

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[552] According to the statement of Khalīl Aĥmed.

[553] *Tabyīn Kadhib al-Muftarī*, p149.

لَّا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ يُوَادُّونَ مَنْ حَادَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَوْ كَانُوا آبَاءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَانَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ كَتَبَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَأَيَّدَهُمْ بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ ۖ وَيُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ حِزْبُ اللَّهِ ۚ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ۞

You will not find a people who have faith in Allāh and the Final Day bearing affection for those who oppose Allāh and His Messenger, even if they are their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their relatives. It is they, upon whose hearts He has inscribed faith and aided them with a spirit from Him; He will make them enter gardens in which streams flow underneath, and they shall abide in them forever. Allāh is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him. This is the party of Allāh. Listen, indeed, only the party of Allāh is successful.[554]

~

Keller tries to present this as an impulsive reaction of a tempermental Alahazrat, even though Deobandis were refuted for years; but they remained adamant without bothering to retract and ignoring any appeal to reconsider not unlike Keller's obstinate stand and insistence on his *Iman, Kufr, and Takfir*, despite third-rate research that could embarrass a high-school student. About the fatwā of *wuqūú* which Khalīl Aĥmad accuses of being a forgery, Alahazrat says in *Tamhīd e Īmān*:

> Books[555] of these people in which these statements of kufr are present have been published by them in their own lifetimes. Some of these books have been through second reprints.[556] Scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah have been refuting them for ages and printing those refutations. That fatwā[557] in which its author unmistakably said that Allāh táālā has lied, and whose original, which carries the signature and seal [of the author] is preserved to this day. Photocopies of this fatwā have been made; and the copy I had taken [along with other books of these blasphemers] to the blessed sanctuaries to show it to scholars, is preserved in the library of Madinah until this day.
>
> This unclean fatwā was published together with a refutation in the booklet *Siyānatu'n Nās* in 1308 by Ĥadīqatu'l Úlūm Publishers, Meerut. It was published again by Gulzār-e-Ĥasanī Publishers, Bombay, in 1318 along with a more detailed refutation. Thereafter, in 1320 it was published once again with another refutation by Tuĥfah-e-Ĥanafiyyah Publishers, Azīmābād-Patna. The person who gave this fatwā[558] died in Jumādā al-Ākhirah 1323 and remained silent until his last breath. Neither did he deny that it was his own fatwā, even though disowning this fatwā was easier than disowning a published book. Nor did he say: 'the meaning of my words is not what the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah describe; rather, I meant something else.' Was it an ordinary thing to be attributed with such an explicit kufr, that he did not bother about it? A fatwā by Zayd, that carries his seal is being circulated openly in his lifetime and his being in good health – and such a fatwā is certainly and absolutely kufr – and this is repeatedly published for years; and people have published refutations of this fatwā; and declare Zayd to be a kāfir on account of this fatwā; Zayd lives for fifteen more years; and Zayd sees and hears all of this – and Zayd does not publish a denial or disavowal concerning that fatwā; and keeps silent with bated breath until his breath has abated – can any sane person imagine that Zayd had denied that the fatwā was his? Or that he meant something else?

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[554] Sūrah Mujādalah, 58:22.

[555] *Barāhīn al-Qāţiáh, Ĥifż al-Īmān, Taĥdhīru'n Nās.*

[556] like *Barāhīn al-Qāţiáh* and *Ĥifż al-Īmān.*

[557] **Alahazrat's Footnote:** that is, the fatwā of Gangohī.

[558] Rashīd Aĥmed Gangohī.

> And those who are alive are silent until this moment; neither can they deny that they have said such things which are present in published books; nor can they find fancy explanations for such explicit insults. In the year 1320, all these blasphemies were refuted together in a single publication. Thereafter, some Muslim leaders took a questionnaire concerning these blasphemies to their kingpin.
>
> One should hear from those present in that meeting describe his state of bewilderment and speechlessness at this development! Even then, he could not deny that such things were written, nor could he come up with an interpretation or explanation for such statements. He only said: "I have not come here to debate, nor do I want to debate; I am ignorant of this skill [of debate] and my teachers were also ignorant. Even if you convince me, I shall keep saying the same thing." The questionnaire and details of this incident were printed on the 15th of Jumādā al-Akhīrah, 1323 and were handed to the kingpin and his followers; and this is the fourth year running but the answer is only a deafening echo of silence. Despite all this, the subterfuge of denial is like saying these people who have insulted Allāh táālā and His Messengers have never been born in this world, and all of this is an outright fabrication. How can one answer this?
>
> May Allāh táālā give them some shame.

The last resort is to slander and accuse Sunni scholars – and Alahazrat – of reckless takfir:

> To conclude, the Barelwi response to the Deobandis was probably far worse than the initial provocation, raising for the first time in Indian history the banner of takfir of one major group of Hanafi Muslims by another.

Alahazrat refuted this as well in his *Tamhīd*:

> When they become helpless and powerless, and cannot find a refuge to flee; and because Allāh táālā has not given them guidance to repent; and they do not refrain from uttering those blasphemies said against Allāh táālā and His Messenger ﷺ; nor withdraw insults that were published, nor proclaim this withdrawal, they resort to slander…
>
> To thwart the poor commoner from the path of Allāh and to instigate them, and seeking to pull wool over their eyes in broad daylight, they tell them: "What is the reliability of these scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah? And what is the credibility of their fatāwā? These people do takfīr for petty things and their machine always keeps churning out fatāwā of kufr. After all, they have declared Ismāýīl Dihlawī as kāfir; Maulvi Is'ĥāq and Maulvi Ábd al-Ĥayy as kāfir…"[559]

Further he says:

> O Muslims! It is not difficult to settle this gossamer deception and weak strategem; just ask those who claim such things for proof. Tell them, if you say that these people have been ruled as kāfir, do you have any evidence to show us where this has been said? Which is the book or booklet or fatwā or pamphlet in which it has been thus ruled?
>
> Yea, yea. If you have proof, then why are you holding it back? Show it to us, and if you cannot – and Allāh táālā knows that you cannot - then see what the Qur'ān says about you being liars. Your Lord Almighty says: ***When they cannot produce witnesses, then it is they who are liars near Allāh.***[560]

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[559] Deobandis do this even now, like Taqi Usmani's fatwā mentioned earlier: 'He [Aĥmed Riđā] ruled Deobandi scholars as kāfir because they refuted these bid'ah practices'.

[560] Sūrah Nūr, 24:13.

> O Muslims! Where is the need to examine that which is proven for ages? This has happened many times; that they have made such vociferous claims and when a Muslim has asked them for evidence, they have turned their backs and never again shewed their faces. Yet, for the shame they have, they do not let go of the repetend stuck on their lips; and why would they let it go? After all, a drowning man will clutch at a straw. They use the only pretext that remains for them to draw a veil on the disbelief of those who insult Allāh and His Messenger; they keep repeating this constantly in the hope that unsuspecting common folk are brainwashed into believing that scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah have this habit of making takfīr needlessly and carelessly; and they must have ruled these blasphemers as kāfir in the same way.[561] O Muslims! Where do these slanderers have proof that we carelessly accuse them of kufr? And where can there be a proof for a figment of imagination?

Alahazrat then presents five examples from his published books in which he withheld from takfīr of Deobandis and their elders. He then earnestly appeals to Muslims to be just and fair and remember the day of Judgement before making or accepting such false accusations:

> O Muslims! I remind you of your religion and your faith; of the day of Judgement, the Prophet and the reckoning in the presence of Al-Raĥmān – and I ask you: Is it not shamelessness to accuse a person of making careless takfīr, in spite of such utmost caution? Is it not oppression? Is it not unjust and unfair to slander him thus?
>
> O Muslims! These are my statements[562] that have been published for years – some ten, some seventeen and nineteen years ago; yet, the ruling of kufr concerning these blasphemers was issued only six years ago in 1320, when the book *Mútamad al-Mustanad* was first published.
>
> Be mindful of Allāh and His Messenger and be judicious; these statements of caution and restraint, not only refute the slanders but also bear witness that the person[563] who has been extremely careful in takfīr did not issue the ruling of kufr unless their kufr had become obvious and glaringly apparent as the mid-day sun. Unless he had seen conclusive, clear, incontrovertible and compelling proof of their explicit insults, for which there is absolutely no possibility of a favourable interpretation, he did not rule them kāfir.

Keller's time-lapse picture of an implacable and impulsive scholar, whose 'fiery pen' and 'temperament' caused the fitnah of takfir in India is debunked by Alahazrat himself:

> Did I have friendship with them at that time, and now, we are estranged? Do we have a dispute on property now, and previously, we did not have any? We seek Allāh's refuge. A Muslim's relation – of love and hate, friendship and enmity is solely for the sake of Allāh táālā and His Messenger ﷺ. As long as these insults were not issued[564] by these blasphemers, and as long as I had not seen or heard[565] of the blasphemies by these

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[561] That is, they must have ruled them kāfir without properly investigating the issue; like Keller accuses Alahazrat of 'making a mistake' in the fatwā.

[562] Refraining from takfīr and utmost caution.

[563] Imām Aĥmed Riđā himself.

[564] **Alahazrat's footnote**: Like Thānawī, whose ugly insult of RasūlAllāh ﷺ was published in 1319 AH. Prior to this he used to present himsef as a Sunni and there was a time he even used to attend celebrations of Mawlid along with other Muslims.

[565] **Alahazrat's footnote**: Like Gangohī and Ambethwī; because earlier, I had received that part of their passage which mentioned their statement of falsehood being a possibility for Allāh táālā; I came to know of it later that he also says that the knowledge of satan is greater than that of RasūlAllāh ﷺ. And concerning Gangohī's fatwā where he says, God can be a liar and if someone calls him a liar, he remains a Sunni and righteous Muslim; I remained silent even after seeing a printed version of the fatwā due to extreme caution and because others had published it, this was not conclusive proof on the basis of which we could make takfīr. Thereafter, I saw the original fatwā with my own eyes, which is in Gangohī's own hand and carries his seal and signature; and despite this being reprinted again and again, he kept silent and did not protest, then it was established conclusively that the fatwā was his own. A similar case was

people concerning Allāh táālā and His Messenger ﷺ, I was mindful of their being Muslims, and their being people who utter the kalimah: *lā ilāha illā Allāh.* I was careful and I exercised caution; even though this necessitated kufr according to the opinion of jurists, I preferred the opinion of kalām scholars. When I saw these statements with my own eyes which explicitly insult Allāh táālā and His Messenger ﷺ, there remained no option except to rule them kāfir.[566] Because our imams have said: **One who doubts in the kufr or punishment of such a person is a kāfir himself**.[567]

Then, it was incumbent upon me to save myself and the faith of my Muslim brothers and was thus compelled to issue the decree of kufr. ***And thus is the recompense of the tyrants***.[568]

وَقُلْ جَآءَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ ٱلْبَـٰطِلُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلْبَـٰطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا

Say: truth has come and falsehood has been vanquished; and falsehood was bound to be vanquished[569]

It is this 'fiery pen' that the Shaykh Abū Ĥusayn Marzūqī[570] extolled in his endorsement to *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*: "Shaykh Aĥmad Riđā Khān al-Baraylawi - may Allāh táālā give him a long life and protect him in both worlds and safeguard his pen – the unsheathed sword upon the necks of renegades – may it never lose its sheen".

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that of the Qādiyāni liar; unless I had seen his books myself, I did not insist upon his takfīr. As long as I had only heard that he claims to be the Mahdī and that he (claims he) is similar to Jesus ﷺ, I had said in reply to a question concerning him: 'He seems to be a madman'. Thereafter, a fatwā came from Amritsar which declared him kāfir; and in which passages from his books with reference to page numbers were listed, I wrote only this much: "If these statements are present in the books of Mirzā, as mentioned here, then certainly he is a kāfir." See the monograph: *Sū'u wa'l Íqāb álā al-Masîĥ al-Kadh'dhāb*, p18. But, yes. When I saw his books myself, then I issued the decisive ruling that he had become a kāfir and an apostate.

[566] Otherwise Alahazrat would himself be enveloped in the ruling as Murtazā Ĥasan Chāndpūrī has acknowledged.

[567] Ĥaşkafī, *Durr al-Mukhtār*, Kitāb al-Jihād, On Apostasy.

[568] Sūrah Al-Mā'idah, 5:29

وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَٰٓؤُا۟ ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ

[569] Sūrah Al-Isrā'a, 17:81.

[570] Shaykh Muĥammad al-Marzūqī Abū Ĥusayn [1284-1365] was the Mufti of Ĥanafīs and Qāđī of Makkah.

VIII. HUSAM AL-HARAMAYN AND MUHANNAD

Sufyān ibn Asad al-Ĥaḍramī narrates: I heard RasūlAllāh ﷺ say: "How great is such deception, when you tell something to your brother and he believes you to be truthful, but [in reality] you are lying".[571]

Yaĥya ibn Maýīn and Aĥmad ibn Ĥanbal once prayed in a masjid of Rusafah, and a preacher narrated a lengthy ĥadīth of about twenty pages saying: "narrated to us Yaĥyā ibn Maýīn and Aĥmad ibn Ĥanbal..." Yaĥyā and Aĥmad both looked at each other flabbergasted and one asked the other: "Did you narrate this to him?" The other said: "By Allāh! I have not heard of this until this moment." Both of them kept quiet until everybody had left and Yaĥyā beckoned him to come over. The preacher came eagerly expecting some gift and Yaĥyā asked him: "Who narrated this ĥadīth to you?" The man said: "Aĥmad ibn Ĥanbal and Yaĥyā ibn Maýīn." He replied: "This is Aĥmad ibn Ĥanbal and I am Yaĥyā ibn Maýīn. Neither of us had ever heard of this ĥadīth, until this moment." The man said: "Are you indeed Yaĥyā?" He replied: "Yes." The preacher said: "I had heard that Yaĥyā ibn Maýīn was stupid and that has been verified now." He said: "How do you know that I am stupid?"

The man said: "You talk as if there is no other Yaĥyā ibn Maýīn and Aĥmad ibn Ĥanbal in the whole world – I have written from seventeen Aĥmad ibn Ĥanbal and Yaĥyā ibn Maýīn."[572]

Muhannad is touted as the answer to *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*, and is presented as the true áqīdah of Deoband. The cover page of Muhannad proclaims:

> **The answer to Maulvi Aĥmad Raza Khān Barelwi's *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*, given by the very scholars of the blessed sanctuaries – may Allāh increase the munificence and esteem of these two sanctuaries**

This blurb is absolutely misleading – neither are those answers by the scholars of Ĥaramayn [who gave attestations to *Ĥusām*] nor are those answers in response to *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*.

Khalīl Aĥmad Sahāranpūrī in Makkah

According to his biographers,[573] Khalīl Aĥmad went to seven Hajj; during his third Ĥajj he was present in Makkah when Alahazrat obtained attestations for his *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*.

	Departure	Return	Remarks
1	1293	-	These two Ĥajj are prior to his own *Barāhīn,* and *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*
2	1297	-	

[571] *Targhīb wa'l Tarhīb*, #4335, #4336; Also in *Mishkāt al-Maṣābīĥ*, #4845 reporting from Abū Dāwūd; Qārī [in *Mirqāt* 9/81] adds that a similar narration is found in *Adab al-Mufrad* of Bukhārī; and also reported by Imam Aĥmed and Ṭabarānī.

[572] *Kitāb al-Quṣṣāṣ*, Ibn al-Jawzī, p304.

[573] *Tārīkh e Mashāyikh e Chisht*, Zakariyyah Kandhlawī, p303-304. Incidentally, the date of his fourth Ĥajj seems to be misprinted as 1338 instead of 1328 in this edition.

	Departure	Return	Remarks
3	**1323**	**1324**	Left for Ĥajj in the middle of **Shawwāl, 1323**; reached **Makkah on 22nd Dhu'l Qaádah**; After Ĥajj, he left for Madīnah and reached on **7 Muharram 1324**. Returned home in **Shawwāl 1324**, after nine months.
4	**1328**	**1329**	Left Saharanpur in the middle of Dhu'l Qádah; reached Makkah on **6th Dhi'l Ĥijjah 1328**; Stayed in Madīnah for 22 days and returned to Saharanpur in the end of **Şafar 1329**.
5	**1333**	**1334**	Apparently returned prior to Ĥajj – the text is not clear in Zakariyah's biography whether it is Ĥajj of 1333 or 1334 that couldn't be completed.
6	**1338**	**1339**	Left Saharanpur on 2nd Shábān 1338; reached Makkah on 11th Ramađān 1338; left Makkah immediately after Ĥajj in the end of **Muĥarram 1339**.
7	**1344**	**-**	Khalīl did not return thereafter and he stayed in Madīnah for the rest of his life.

History of Muhannad according to Deobandis:

1. Imām Aĥmad Riđā attributed false beliefs to elders of Deoband and made takfīr based on those statements in his book *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*. He presented this book to scholars of the two sanctuaries and obtained their signatures.
2. The scholars of Madīnah were disturbed by this takfīr and they sent a list of twenty-seven[574] questions seeking clarifications to which Khalīl Aĥmad responded in the form of *Muhannad*.

In another version: [575]

3. Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān compiled a treatise in which he cited the statements of Deobandi elders by distorting the wording and meaning [*lafżi aur mánawi taĥrīf*]
4. Various strategies were employed to obtain the attestations of the scholars of Ĥaramayn; and since those scholars were not fully aware about Deobandis or their writings, they wrote attestations according to those citations.
5. Ĥusayn Aĥmad Tandwi was present in Madīnah at that time, but the activity of *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn* and attestations were done in such a secret manner that escaped his notice.
6. After learning of this takfīr, he apprised the scholars of Ĥaramayn about the reality; and who compiled a list of 26 questions and sent them to Deoband for answers – which were answered by Khalīl Aĥmad Ambethwi and named *Muhannad*.

[574] Thus it is in the biographical note by Zakariyyah Kandhlawī in *Mashāyikh e Chisht*, p321-322.

[575] In the foreword to *Muhannad* by Mazhar Ĥusayn signed 1382 AH.

7. These were attested by all the prominent scholars of Deoband and also from Ĥijāz, Egypt and Syria. This Deobandi propaganda which Keller repeats faithfully:

> That is, scholars and muftīs whose understanding of the matter derived from Ahmad Reza Khan's sending them his own *Husam al-Haramayn* to ask for endorsements, **which a number of them gave, then subsequently withdrew when Deobandis presented their side**, some of the most salient points of which have been conveyed in the previous section.

Even though the above statement conceals an itsy-bitsy truth, it is nevertheless a bald-faced lie to claim that attestation were withdrawn. Which scholar withdrew his attestation? Where is any statement by any Hijazi scholar who signed *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn* that says:

> "We withdraw our attestation to *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*, we were deceived"

Take a look at *Ĥusām*, and the detailed statements that explicitly mention either Alahazrat's *Mustanad* or the names of Deobandi elders. We are just asking for one express statement that says Alahazrat had deceived them and they rescind any endorsement. Those acquainted with true scholarship know the zeal with which upright scholars safeguard their own reputation – this is a matter of takfīr, why didn't any of them explicitly withdraw that takfīr? Are Keller and other Deobandis telling common Muslims that these scholars and muftīs of Ĥaramayn were over-zealous when issuing takfīr and were shy of correcting that 'error' and therefore became vague when 'Deobandis presented their side'? It is a side note, but Ahmad Reza Khān did not 'send' his *Ĥusām*; he took it there himself.

The truth in Keller's statement is, that his tract derives from the most important apology of Deobandis. Keller was conveying salient points of the *Muhannad* apology packaged as his own research:

> when Deobandis presented their side, some of the most salient points of which have been coveyed [sic] in the previous section.

Even if we take the claim of Deobandis at face-value, there are only two scholars common to both *Ĥusām* and *Muhannad*. Shaykh BāBuṣayl and Shaykh Barzanji. According to *Muhannad*, Shaykh Barzanji wrote a separate treatise named *Kamāl al-Tathqīf wa't Taqwīm* in which he mentioned Khalīl Aĥmad's request to evaluate his answers, which Barzanji elaborates and says that truth is wājib in both *kalām lafżī* and *kalām nafsī*. All the 23 attestations are for this risalah of Barzanji – but Khalīl Aĥmad deemed it prudent to include it in *Muhannad* as **attestations by induction**.

We shall not evaluate *Muhannad* in detail in this book, but only mention a few discrepancies in the official Deobandi story to highlight the deception – though it is extremely frustrating and a difficult battle with those who can lie and deceive with such ease. *Muhannad* has been debunked by Mawlānā Naýīmuddīn Muradābādī and Mawlānā Hashmat Álī in Urdu; it has come to our notice that English translations of these refutations are in progress and will be available shortly, *in-shā'Allāh*.

1. According to one story – the scholars of both sanctuaries compiled these questions; and according to Zakariyyah Kandhlawī, this was the initiative of the "scholars of Madīnah".

2. Who are these 'scholars'? Did Deobandis receive an anonymous letter to which they responded, or if that questionnaire was signed by scholars, why were their names not mentioned?

3. It is quite possible that Ĥusayn Aĥmad Tandwi, who was present in Madīnah in those days must have compiled the questions himself – because the questions assume that it is a false accusation:

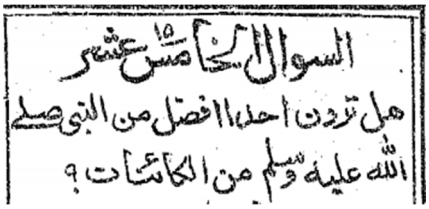
السؤال الثالث والعشرون ٢٣
هل قال الشيخ الاجل علامة الزمان المولوى رشيد احمد
الگنگوهى بفعلية كذب البارى تعالى وعدم تضليل قائل
ذلك ام هذا من الافتراآت عليه وعلى التقدير
الثانى كيف الجواب عما يقوله البريلوى انه يضع
عنده تمثال فتوى الشيخ المرحوم بفوتوگراف المشتمل على ذلك

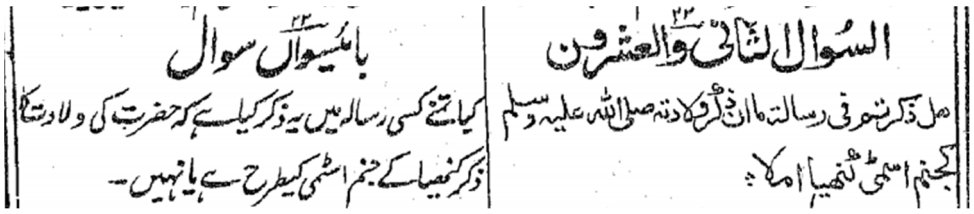
Did the prominent shaykh, the greatest scholar of the age [*államatu'z zamān*] Mawlawi Rashīd Aĥmad Gangohī say falsehood has occurred by Allāh táālā and to abstain from deeming anyone who says so a heretic; or is this a false accusation – and if it is the latter, how do you answer to what Baraylawi claims that he has a photocopy of a fatwā by the late shaykh.[576]

Wherever Gangohī, Thānawī or Deobandis are mentioned it is with immense respect and Alahazrat is mentioned just as "Baraylawi," which clearly indicates that these questions were posed by someone who was either a Deobandi himself or certainly a Deobandi sympathiser.

4. If it was an Arab scholar, and he was already acquainted with Deobandi elders, why did he not refute Alahazrat or question him at that time? If they were not acquainted with Deobandi elders, why are they referring with deference to those whom they have already ruled kāfir? If it is to seek clarification, why the assumption of fraud on the part of Alahazrat and assumption of innocence on the Deobandis EVEN before receiving clarifications? Does it sound neutral?

5. Furthermore, the questions have expressions that could not be posed by Arabs. Do Arabs use such expressions as in Question #15? How did the Arabs come to know of Janmashtami/Kanhaiya and the comparison by Khalīl-Rashīd? Remember the official line of Deobandis concerning the questionnaire – the Arabs formulated the questionnaire by themselves and sent it to Deoband.


السوال الخامس عشر ١٥
هل ترون احدا افضل من النبى صلى
الله عليه وسلم من الكائنات ؟


السؤال الثانى والعشرون ٢٢
هل ذكرتم فى رسالة ما ان ذكر ولادته صلى الله عليه وسلم
كجنم اسمى كنهيا املا ؟

بائیسواں سوال ٢٢
کیا تم نے کسی رسالہ میں یہ ذکر کیا ہے کہ حضرت کی ولادت کا
ذکر کنھیا کے جنم اسٹمی کیطرح ہے یا نہیں۔

6. Did Alahazrat mention Janmashtami/Kanhaiya in *Ĥusām*? If not, why did these scholars 'disturbed' by the takfīr mention this?

7. Khalīl Aĥmad was present in Makkah during the compilation and attestation of *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn* – why did he not confront Alahazrat at that time or even explain his own version of the story? This

[576] *Muhannad*, Question #23.

objection is preempted by a fancy allegation: Alahazrat obtained all this in utmost secrecy and employed stratagems to get them.

8. Suppose this allegation were true – and all this was done in secret; *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn* was not a secret anymore in 1325 as it was published and available all over the country.

9. The best option for Deobandis would have been to take *Ĥusām* back to Ĥijāz and state clarifications for what is mentioned in *Ĥusām*, and get counter-attestations for such a work. Instead they came up with their own questions with rambling answers, without any reference to *Ĥusām*, and yet claim it to be a refutation of *Ĥusām*. For example:

> Zayd says: "Abū Bakr ؓ usurped the right of khilāfah of Mawla Álī ؓ."
>
> Sharaf criticises this and calls Zayd a Rāfiđī.
>
> When brought to a muftī, Zayd does *taqiyyah* and says: "I believe that RasūlAllāh ﷺ is the most exalted being in the creation and absolutely superior to all human beings. I believe that wine is Ĥarām and fasting in Ramađān is obligatory. I believe that Abū Bakr ؓ was the khalifah before Álī ؓ."

   Can this answer be deemed a refutation of Sharaf? Suppose this answer is presented to any muftī, would anyone blame Zayd for being a Rāfiđī?

10. Suppose Khalīl was unaware of the activity of *Ĥusām* in 1323/24 when he was present in Makkah himself; then what stopped him from confronting it and addressing *Ĥusām* directly on his four further visits to Ĥijāz and Ĥajj?

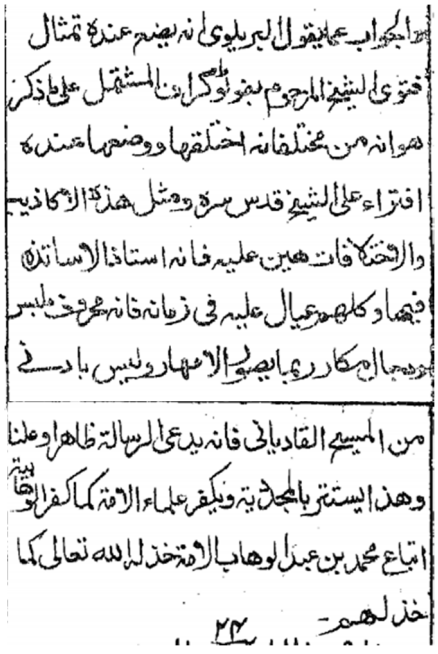
11. The questions in *Muhannad* are loaded and already skewed in favour of Deobandis. Instead of asking directly whether Ashraf Álī or Khalīl said what was mentioned in *Ĥusām* BY QUOTING it, the question is oblique and posed in a way that Khalīl can slither away with a cop-out.

12. In some answers, Khalīl practically denies what Deobandis and their elders have said in their books – and indeed, Khalīl's own writings. Thus, even if that *Muhannad* was attested by scholars, it proves the Deobandi beliefs wrong – and in no way is a refutation of *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*.

13. In Question #23, Khalīl Aĥmad accuses Alahazrat to be similar to Qādiyānī and that he claimed Messengership covertly cloaked under Revivalism.

14. If the accusation made above is true, what did Khalīl Aĥmad or any of his fellow Deobandis do about it? Did they write any refutation against Alahazrat on ***this issue***, or if they did not, why did they turn a blind eye for someone who covertly claims messengership?

15. Khalīl Aĥmad claims that Alahazrat was skilled in forging seals himself; we invite them to give examples where he has 'forged' such seals. Why did Gangohī not deny this fatwā himself? This fatwā and its refutation was published for 15/16 years – never



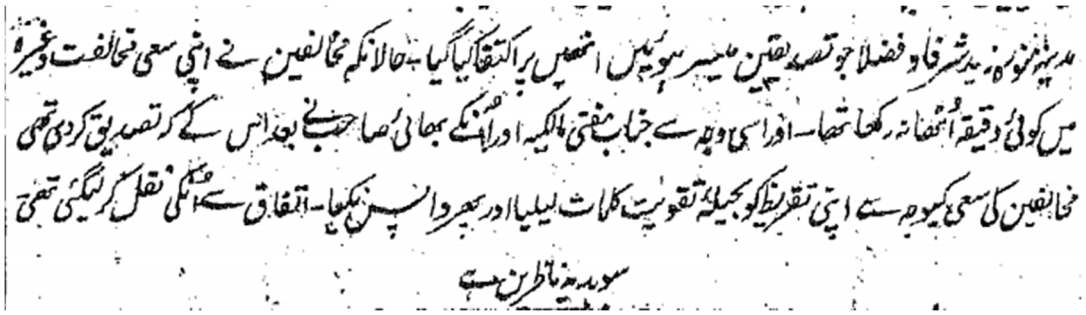
did Gangohī deny that it was his fatwā. We have analysed it in *Preamble to Faith*, and the fatwā is shown in Appendix C.

16. If Khalīl had such a clear conscience and nothing to hide, why did he not get attestations from Mawlānā Ábd al-Ĥaqq Ilāhabādī (1252-1333), one of the most prominent scholars of Makkah? He was of Indian origin who knew both Arabic and Urdu very well, and has attested *Ĥusām*; he was also a senior khalifah of Haji Imdādullāh Muhājir Makkī. If Khalīl needed exoneration, why did he not go to him in 1328/29 – as the shaykh passed away only in 1333?

17. Regardless, a judicious person can see that none of those who signed the original *Ĥusām* 'withdrew' their attestations. Or does Keller have a new meaning for 'withdrawal'? What does withdraw mean after all?

18. The acme of Khalīl's righteousness is that even when someone 'withdraws' their attestation, he will not let go. Notice that the muftī of Mālikīs and his brother – who took back their 'attestations' of *Muhannad* on a false pretext and never returned it; but Khalīl is not one to listen. He has a sob story, listen:

    However, our opponents did not spare any effort in their activities to oppose [us] and it is therefore that the muftī of Malikis and his brother had already given an endorsement; but due to the efforts of our opponents, they took back the endorsement on the pretext of making it sound stronger and did not return it. Incidentally, copies [of those endorsements] had been made and thus, here we present it to our readers:



    Concerning this, we ask:

    - Is it prudent or righteousness to cite an endorsement that was taken back?
    - If the person has no qualms to take back an endorsement on false pretext, is the endorsement of such a person of any worth?
    - If someone has given an endorsement and due to 'activity of opponents' changes his mind, and withdraws that endorsement – does it not mean that the person is now opposed to you regardless of the stimulus or his previous stand?

19. Khalīl made his subsequent visits in 1328, 1333, 1334 and 1338 – he had ample time to get at least one true withdrawal that explicitly names Alahazrat's *Ĥusām*, and a statement that they were misled and now they had understood the true meanings of those statements, they annul the endorsement of *Ĥusām*. Why did Khalīl not do it?

20. The images shown here from *Muhannad* are from the earliest known edition of 1345/1926; and it is widely believed that it is the first edition itself; if there is an older edition, or references to this exist in Deobandi literature prior to 1345, can Deobandis please highlight it?

But Deobandis in a most ugly display of hypocrisy use *Muhannad* only to deceive common people and foreign scholars; they claim that it was an answer to *Ĥusām* and once that objective is satisfied, they don't bother about it or its explanations and happily keep peddling their Wahābī agenda. For example, Khalīl deplores Muĥammad ibn Ábd al-Wahhāb, yet his shaykh Gangohī praised him and his beliefs. Khalīl prances around in hoops about Mawlid but his fatāwā are clear that he deemed Mawlid as a reprehensible bidáh; not just the standing [*qiyām*] but he and his blind shaykh Gangohī refuted Mawlid as "impermissible in every form."

In fact, the book *Barāhīn al-Qāṭiáh* was meant to be a refutation of *Anwār e Sāṭiáh* which was written to prove the validity of *Mawlūd* and *fātiĥah*; but Khalīl simply denies everything and embraces Sunni beliefs; if Sunni scholars attest such an answer, why would it be surprising? It also appears that Khalīl has played fast and loose with some 'answers' because, Shaykh Barzanji says that the most important answer is about "truth being wājib in both *kalām lafżī* and *kalām nafsī,*" which he has elaborated in his own work. We ask Deobandis: do they reject *imkān kazib* in *kalām lafżī* or not? If yes, then what is the brouhaha about? If no, what is Shaykh Barzanji talking about?

~

Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn

On his second Ĥajj, Alahazrat presented the extract from his *Mustanad* written in 1320, and in which is the takfīr of the following four Deobandi elders:

1. Rashīd Aĥmad Gangohī for his fatwā of *wuqūú*, the photocopy of which was presented as proof.
2. Khalīl Aĥmad for claiming that Satan has knowledge of the terrestial realm which RasūlAllāh ﷺ does not; and it is polytheism to believe such knowledge for RasūlAllāh ﷺ, even though Satan has such knowledge and Satan's knowledge is proven by scriptural texts but there is no such scriptural evidence for RasūlAllāh ﷺ possessing similar knowledge.
3. Ashraf Álī Thānawī for saying: "what is special about the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ; such knowledge is possessed by madmen and beasts."
4. Qāsim Nānotwī for his claim that "even if a prophet appears after the coming of RasūlAllāh ﷺ, there will be no effect on his finality."

Those statements can be verified with the images from those books which are included in Appendix C in this book; they can also be compared with the two passages quoted by Keller and translated by his Deobandi disciple. 33 scholars of Ĥaramayn wrote endorsements to this fatwā and one of the longest is by Shaykh Barzanji. During this period, Alahazrat also wrote *Dawlah al-Makkiyyah* which also gained numerous endorsements – but none of those endorsements are included in *Ĥusām* and claimed to be endorsements of *Ĥusām*. One of the accusations on *Ĥusām* is that the scholars of the sanctuaries did not know anything about this controversy and Alahazrat deceived them – which is also mentioned on the cover page of *Muhannad*, referring to Alahazrat as *khādiý ahl al-Ĥaramayn* – 'he who deceived the people of Ĥaramayn.' According to

Deobandi versions, Alahazrat mentioned their elders alongside Qādiyānī, and the scholars of Ĥaramayn were fooled into thinking that they were all the same group and therefore wrote endorsements amidst confusion. The truth is, that in the introduction of *Ĥusām*, it is clearly said that these people are known as scholars and prominent folk who have uttered blasphemies:

> [you are requested to] explicitly mention about these leaders of heretics who are named [in the fatwā]: are they indeed like [Aĥmad Riđā] has described them and his ruling concerning them is indeed correct? Or is their takfīr impermissible and [impermissible] to warn the common folk and make them abhor them?
>
> Even if they contravene [or deny *đarūriyāt al-dīn*] a fundamental aspect of religion? Even if they blaspheme against Allāh táālā, the Lord of the worlds and disparage His honourable Messenger? Even if they print and publish those insolent words? Just because they are known as scholars? Is it necessary to respect them, even if they are Wahābīs and even if they insult Allāh and the Chief of all Messengers ﷺ as claimed by vacillating common folk?
>
> Our Masters! Clarify this matter, to aid the religion given by our Lord Almighty and explain whether those mentioned [in the fatwā] and their statements – in books such as *Iyjāz e Ahmedi* and *Izālatu'l Awhām* of Qādiyānī; the photocopy of the fatwā by Rashīd Aĥmad Gangohī; *Barāhīn al-Qāţiáh*, which is actually Gangohī's but attributed to his student Khalīl Aĥmad Ambethwi and *Ĥifż al-Īmān* of Ashraf Álī Thānawī; whose statements are highlighted by overscore.

Concerning Qāsim Nānotwī, he says:

> And Nānotwī: This is the person who was described by Muĥammad Álī Kanpuri, the convener of Nadwah as physician of this nation [*ĥakīm al-ummah*]

Concerning Gangohī, he says:

> Look at this person – who is claimed to have a high footing in knowledge and faith; and [claimed to] have a far extending reach in faith and gnosis; he is known among his followers as the spiritual pole [*quţub*] and the helper of the age [*ghawth al-zamān*] – see how he insults Muĥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ

The point is, unlike *Muhannad* which indulges in character assassination, *Ĥusām* criticises their positions, and Alahazrat makes it amply clear that these people are considered scholars and leaders in the community – the *dhawi'l hay'āt*, a refuge some modern apologists have been seeking lately. Shaykh Sayyid Ismāýīl Khalīl says in his attestation:

> I say: All these sects mentioned in the question: Ghulām Aĥmad al-Qādiyānī, Rashīd Aĥmad and his followers like Khalīl Ambethwi, Ashraf Álī and others – there is no doubt in their kufr nor any scope [to excuse]; rather, there is no doubt in the kufr of anyone who hesitates in making takfīr of these people, because some of them reject the religion completely and some others deny fundamental precepts of religion which are agreed-upon by all Muslims; thus they do not remain in Islām either in name nor in form as it should be apparent to even the most ignorant among common folk – because what they have said is expelled from the ears; and rejected by hearts, minds and souls.
>
> Further I also say: I was under the impression concerning these misguiding heretics, disbelieving criminals – who have become apostates, that their corrupted beliefs were based on poor understanding of the statements of our glorious elders; but now I know for sure that these are preachers of kufr seeking to invalidate the religion of Muĥammad ﷺ.

Shaykh Ĥamdān al-Maĥrisī wrote:

> I have perused what has been written by the scholar of immense understanding, the researcher Shaykh Aĥmad Riđā Khān, the extract from his book: *Mútamad al-Mustanad*, and I have found it to be profound; may Allāh reward the author as he has removed harmful things from the path of Muslims and has [fulfilled] "good advice for [the sake of] Allāh and His Messenger and the imāms of the religion and the common folk".

He wrote a second attestation after re-reading and re-examining the issue:

> I have reviewed the epistle of the shaykh, the eminent scholar, the penetrator of perplexing issues of knowledge, and who elucidates in most eloquent words and gives satisfactory explanation – and consummate explication, Shaykh Aĥmad Riđā Khān al-Baraylawi; the epistle he has named: *Mútamad al-Mustanad*, may Allāh táālā protect his soul and may its magnificence abide. I have found his epistle conclusive and convincing in his refutation of those he has mentioned therein – and they are the filthy accursed Ghulām Aĥmad al-Qādiyānī, the Dajjāl,[577] the liar, the Musaylamah of end times; Rashīd Aĥmad Gangohī, Khalīl Aĥmad Ambethwi and Ashraf Álī Thānawī – these folk, if it is proven that they have said what the shaykh has mentioned:
>
> That is, the claim of prophethood by the Qādiyānī and denigration of the Prophet ﷺ by Rashīd Aĥmad, Khalīl Aĥmad and Ashraf Álī mentioned above – there is no doubt in their kufr and that it is obligatory for those in authority to execute them.

Shaykh Sayyid Aĥmad al-Barzanji wrote:

> Concerning the sects Amīriyyah, Nadhīriyyah and Qāsimiyyah and their claim: "If it is supposed that hypothetically in his ﷺ time, or even after his time [arrival of] a new prophet, will not have any effect on his finality…" This statement is explicit in its deeming possibility of prophethood after him; and undoubtedly, anyone who deems it possible is a kāfir by ijmāá of all Muslim scholars.

He writes further:

> Concerning the "Belying Wahābīs," followers of Rashīd Aĥmad Gangohī who says that: "takfīr should not be made of a person who has said that falsehood of Allāh táālā has occurred" – Glorified and Exalted is Allāh from what they attribute him. There is no doubt, here too, that one who says that "lie by Allāh táālā has occurred" is a kāfir – and his kufr is known by the fundamental principle of religion. And he who does not deem him a kāfir, is his partner in kufr. Because the statement: "Allāh táālā has lied" leads to invalidation of the entire shariah ….

He writes further:

> As for the proof of this heretical sect for the possibility of falsehood [*tajwīz al-kadhib*][578] for Allāh táālā – Glorified and Exalted is He from what they attribute Him – that they base it on the opinion of some imāms on the possibility of rescinding punishment [*tajwīz* of *khulf fi'l waýīd*] of sinners; using this evidence is invalid…

The endorsement of Shaykh Barzanji is the most elaborate, in which he explains the principles and the reasons for why they are deemed kāfir. If Keller had only read *Ĥusām* and its endorsements, his article would have been shorter and perhaps closer to reality.

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[577] Dajjāl also means a very big liar, but in religious terminology, he is what is known as the antichrist.

[578] We would like to ask Keller if Shaykh al-Barzanji also did not understand the terms *jawaz áqlī* and *imkān al-kadhib*? Or perhaps he too needed instruction in Arabic nuance.

Shaykh Barzanji continues:

> Concerning the statement of the aforementioned Rashīd Aĥmad Gangohī in his book: *Barāhīn al-Qāţiáh*: "Verily this extensiveness of knowledge is proven for Satan and Angel of Death by scriptural proof; where is the scriptural proof for such extensiveness for the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ, such that it refutes all scriptural proofs and establishes polytheism…" This is kufr for two reasons:
>
> **First Reason**: It is explicit that Iblīs is more extensive in knowledge than RasūlAllāh ﷺ; this is explicit in denigrating him ﷺ.
>
> **Second Reason**: He has deemed that to establish the extensiveness of the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ as polytheism.
>
> The imāms of all the four madh'habs have written that whosoever denigrates RasūlAllāh ﷺ is a kāfir; and whosoever deems as kufr, that which is certainly faith, is also a kāfir.

Furthermore he says quoting Ashraf Álī Thānawī's blasphemous passage:

> The ruling concerning him is also that it is explicit kufr by ijmāá – the disparagement of the Prophet ﷺ in it is worse than that of Rashīd Aĥmad, thus comparatively it has to be [worse] kufr.

Indeed, the shaykh also stipulates the condition:

> This is the ruling concerning these sects and these individuals, if it is proven that they have uttered these filthy statements.

All of the above quotations are from endorsements in *Ĥusām*. Can Keller explain how these scholars did not know the 'context' and where exactly is the possible confusion? If at all these scholars were unaware first and were apprised by Deobandis later, why did they not write an explicit endorsement saying – we had said so, but we were deceived – we revoke that endorsement.

Why?

There is a side story to the affair. Alahazrat had written *Dawlah al-Makkiyyah* at the same time and attestations were being written for that book as well. During his audience with the Chief Muftī – that is Shaykh Barzanji himself, the issue of 'Knowledge of the Five' was debated; Shaykh Barzanji belongs to the group of Sunni scholars who do not accept that the Five were given to RasūlAllāh ﷺ, but in Alahazrat's *Dawlah*, there is proof that it was given. So, he objected and thereafter wrote a separate epistle named *Ghāyatu'l Ma'mūl*. When Deobandis saw that Shaykh Barzanji 'refuted' Aĥmad Riđā Khān, they pounced upon it and published it in, showing exhibits in their own books. The fallacy of generalisation was that Shaykh Barzanji refuted Aĥmad Riđā Khān, period; therefore, Deobandis are acquitted. However, in reality, Shaykh Barzanji repeated his takfīr in *Ghāyatu'l Ma'mūl*. His difference with Alahazrat was on *The Five*. This issue is not fundamental and scholars have disagreed – but Alahazrat is not alone in his viewpoint; and Shaykh Muĥammad al-Kattānī[579] has acknowledged it. After mentioning numerous verses and traditions, he says:

> After you have learnt all this, know that concerning The Five and knowledge of the soul, there are two schools of thought [among Sunni scholars]: The first group says that RasūlAllāh ﷺ did not have knowledge of these, nor the means to attain them; [when he ﷺ was not given these, obviously] not to mention others [were also not given]. Rather, knowledge of these is only with Allāh táālā and He has not informed any human, nor anyone

[579] Shaykh Kattani has ijazah from this very Shaykh Barzanji as noted in his *Fahras*.

in the creation – as it is apparent from the various proofs we have mentioned above which are explicit. This group of scholars deemed this knowledge as specific unlike other generic forms; and restricted when mentioned in absolutes. This is the madh'hab of the majority of ĥadīth scholars and the preferred opinion of most jurists.

The second school says that RasūlAllāh ﷺ did not leave this world until he was informed by Allāh táālā about these [Five and the soul] and other than that which were hitherto unclear or concealed from him, and that he was deserving and befitting of honour and exaltedness – such as generic forms [of knowledge] which we shall discuss in the Third Category. This is the madh'hab of research scholars; and emphasised by many saints and people of distinction; and this is the accurate position and the reality, which no judicious person will argue against; nor will anyone disagree with it after having read this epistle except reckless or heedless folk.[580]

Shaykh Barzanji preferred the opinion of the first school, and hence his rejoinder *Ghāyatu'l Ma'mūl*. When Alahazrat came to know of this he wrote glosses on *Dawlah* refuting the objections of *Ghāyah*:

- *Inbā'a al-Ĥayy anna Kalāmahu'l Maşūn Tibyānun li Kulli Shayy*
- *Ĥāsim al-Muftariyy álā Sayyid al-Bariyy*

The second was a refutation of a false accusation that he [Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān] believed that knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ was equal to that of Allāh, except for the difference of accident/pre-eternal, *ĥudūth/qidam*. The point is, that in his epistle, Shaykh Barzanji reiterated the takfīr – let alone withdraw it and the rest of the book is about his disagreement on the finer point of *ílm al-ghayb*:

Thereafter, a scholar from India named Ahmed Riđā Khān came to the City of Radiance [*Madīnah*] and when he met me, he informed me first about people from India, disbelievers and heretics – among whom [were] Ghulām Aĥmad al-Qādiyānī, because he claims similitude with Jesus and claims that he receives revelation and prophethood;

And among them are sects named Amīriyyah, Nadhīriyyah and Qāsimiyyah – who claim: "If it is supposed hypothetically whether in his ﷺ time, or even after his time [arrival of] a new prophet, will not have any effect on his finality…"

Among them, the sect of Belying Wahābīs – followers of Rashīd Aĥmad Gangohī, who does not do takfīr of one who says that Allāh táālā has lied; and among them, Rashīd Aĥmad[581] who claims expansiveness of knowledge for Satan but absence of the same for the Prophet ﷺ;

Among them is Ashraf Álī al-Thānawī, who said: "If knowledge of unseen is valid for the Prophet ﷺ, as claimed by Zayd, it should be enquired what does he mean by it: Does he mean partial knowledge of unseen or complete? If he means partial knowledge, what is the speciality for RasūlAllāh ﷺ in this? Such knowledge of unseen is possessed by Zayd and Amr, rather every child and madman, rather all animals and beasts [possess such knowledge].

He [Aĥmad Riđā Khān] wrote an epistle refuting them and demonstrating the invalidity of these statements in a book *Mútamad al-Mustanad*; he informed me of the summary of that epistle in which he has only mentioned

[580] *Jalā'a al-Qulūb* 1/191.

[581] Thus it is in the printed edition of *Ghāyatu'l Ma'mūl,* when it should be Khalīl Ambethwī. This could be a printer's mistake or a lapse on the part of the author, but thus it is on page 9 of the book.

those statements and refuted them in brief. He asked for an endorsement and verification for it and [I gave it]; the gist of which is:

> **If it is proven that these people have indeed uttered such filthy statements, they are disbelievers and heretics – because all these [statements] are in violation of the consensus of this nation.**

In the course of this [endorsement] we mentioned a few proofs refuting such statements.

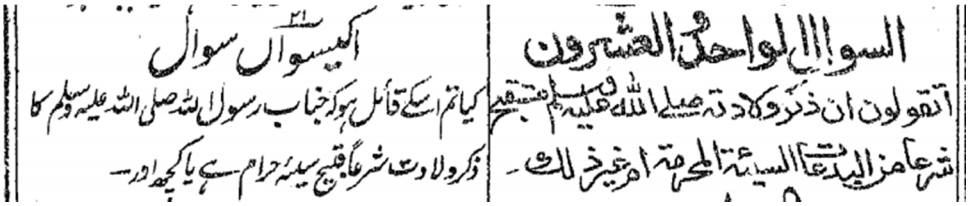
Thereafter, the aforementioned Aĥmad Riđā Khān informed me that he had written an epistle in which he claims that RasūlAllāh ﷺ was given encompassing knowledge of everything including *The Five*, and it does not preclude except the knowledge of the Person of Allāh táālā and His Attributes and that there is no difference between the knowledge of the Creator – Glorious is He and Exalted – and the knowledge of the Prophet ﷺ ... [582]

If those statements are present in those books – the ruling is valid. I read it a few times but nowhere did the Shaykh mention 'intention.' This was first published together with *Shihāb Thāqib* of Ĥusayn Aĥmad Tāndwi by Deobandis themselves, which proves that:

1. the attestations of *Ĥusām* were authentic, at least that of Barzanji is corroborated.
2. he indeed ruled them kāfir for those statements provided the attribution was found to be true
3. he disagreed with Alahazrat on the issue of knowledge of *The Five*.
4. the attestations of *Ĥusām* were sought openly and from prominent scholars

His doubt however, that Alahazrat believed that the knowledge of Allāh and RasūlAllāh ﷺ were equal, is a misunderstanding – Alahazrat has only ***mentioned*** the opinion of some sunni scholars such as Shaykh Bakri, the shaykh of Mulla Álī al-Qārī even though Alahazrat himself does not agree with it. Anybody interested in this can read *Dawlah* and its commentaries.
With such attestation and reiteration, where is the 'withdrawal' of Shaykh Barzanji claimed by Deobandis? If he could write and rewrite in such a detailed manner and confirm takfīr, why did he not write two lines repudiating or revoking that takfīr? Only two lines stating that he was deceived and his takfīr was based on the claim of such-and-such statement; now that he has found that to be false, he has rescinded that takfīr.

Unlike *Ghayatu'l Ma'mūl*, this purported epistle *Kamāl al-Tathqīf wa't Taqwīm,* has not been made available in full – *Muhannad* cites three excerpts and how can we trust them after a similar claim about *Ghayatu'l Ma'mūl* has been proven false? Withal, the takfīr of Deobandis made in *Ĥusām* was for the blasphemous statements; only an express statement invalidating either the endorsements or refutation of Alahazrat can be considered as a refutation of *Ĥusām*. In sha'Allāh, we shall examine the hypocrisy, lies and deception of *Muhannad* in a separate paper; and we end this with just one example:


السوال الواحد والعشرون
اتقولون ان ذکر ولادۃ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم مستقبح شرعا من البدعات السیئۃ المحرمۃ ام غیر ذلک۔

اکیسواں سوال
کیا تم اسکے قائل ہو کہ جناب رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کا ذکر ولادت شرعاً قبیح سیئہ حرام ہے یا کچھ اور۔

[582] *Ghāyatu'l Ma'mūl*, p9-10. Published by AICP of the Ahbash group, based on a Lahore edition (most likely a Deobandi print).

Question #21: Do you say that the remembrance of his birth is abhorred by the sharīáh and a reprehensible bidáh, which is forbidden? Or [say] contrary to this?

Now everybody in the subcontinent knows that Deobandis criticise celebration of Mawlid; avid literalists can distort this: the question is talking about the 'actual birth' of the Prophet ﷺ and this has been mentioned in the ĥadīth, etc., and the question is not talking about celebrating Mawlid per se. However, from the viewpoint of Sunni scholars who were purportedly reviewing *Muhannad*, this refers to celebration of Mawlid – contrary to Wahābīs who term celebrating Mawlid as a reprehensible bidáh. Khalīl Aĥmad's answer to question #21:

Allāh forbid! Such a thing cannot be said by any Muslim, let alone us[583] speak ill of the remembrance of his ﷺ blessed birth, rather remembrance of the dust under his shoes and the urine of his donkey [cannot be deemed] ugly, nor as a reprehensible bidáh. The remembrance of anything, howsoever little in its relation to RasūlAllāh ﷺ, is deemed dear and recommended [*mandūb*] and among the loftiest praiseworthy acts [*mustaĥabb*] according to us. It is the same for us whether such remembrance is about his blessed birth, or his urine and refuse, or his standing or sitting or sleeping as I have clarified in my epistle named *Barāhīn al-Qāţiáh* in various places. Concerning this [issue] are fatāwā of our teachers – may Allāh táālā have mercy upon them – for example, the fatwā of Mawlānā Aĥmad Álī Muĥaddith al-Sahāranpuri, the student of Shāh Muĥammad Is'ĥāq al-Dihlawī, who emigrated to Makkah later on; here is a translation of that fatwā which represents everyone else: The shaykh was asked about the celebration of the Prophet's birthday [*majlis al-mīlād*] and the conditions when it is permissible and when is it impermissible; he replied:

> The remembrance of the birth of our Master, RasūlAllāh ﷺ by mentioning authentic narrations [*riwāyāt şaĥīĥah*] in such free times when one is not busy in litanies and obligatory prayers; and in a manner that does not oppose the way of the Companions and scholars of the first three centuries who have been given glad tidings of righteousness; nor with such beliefs which are polytheistic and innovation; when such remembrance observes etiquette and is not opposed to that of Companions – which is implied by his ﷺ ĥadīth: "[that way] upon which I am and my Companions are…" when such remembrance is free from things frowned upon by the sharīáh, [such a gathering] deserves reward and blessings – on the condition that it is accompanied by pure intention and sincere faith – then, this too shall be included as a beautiful form of supererogatory dhikr and it is not limited to any specific time. When this is the case, we do not know any Muslim will consider it impermissible by sharīáh or that it is a bidáh…[to the end of his fatwā]

Thus it is known from the above that we do not repudiate the remembrance of his ﷺ blessed birth, but refute abominable practices which accompany it as you have seen yourself[584] in gatherings of Mawlid in India.
Such gatherings where baseless and fabricated narrations are retold; men and women mix together and money is wasted on extravagant lighting and fires; and they believe that such a gathering is obligatory and they criticise, abuse and do takfīr of those who do not attend their gatherings – and other such reprehensible things frowned upon by the sharīáh.

Allāh forbid! We do not say that the remembrance of his blessed birth is abominable and bidáh; how can anybody expect that any Muslim will utter such a filthy statement. This too is a slander upon us by the mulĥids,[585] the Dajjāls, the liars – may Allāh táālā humiliate them in land and sea; on plains and mountains.

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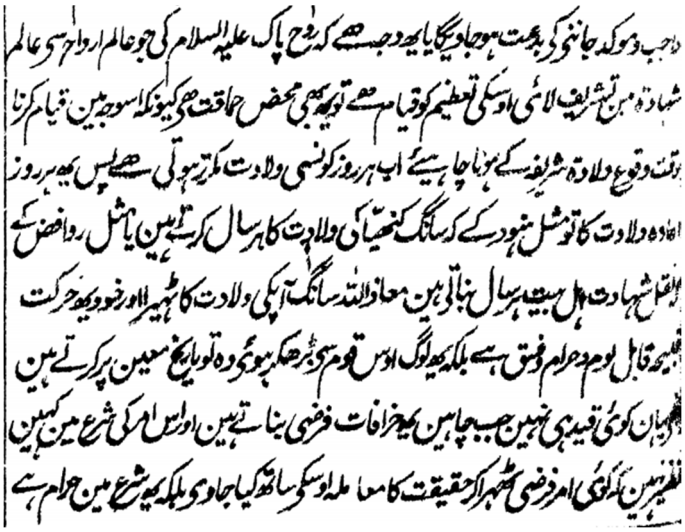
[583] He means to say: 'us' as in scholars and ĥadīth imāms and ghawth and qutub.

[584] *shuftumūhā* is the phrase used; in what appears to be a Freudian slip; the questioner is supposed to be an Arab who doesn't know anything –referring him to the Indian scene, and that he has seen it, invalidates the claim that the questions were posed by Arab scholars who were not aware of the Deobandi situation.

[585] *mulĥid*: a closet apostate – a person with a heresy that is kufr, and who conceals it from other Muslims.

Notice how Khalīl fawns over Mawlid and how he repeatedly says that he is only against *munkarāt* and certainly not against Mawlid. Notice the number of lies he has said such as 'people make takfīr if you don't attend their Mawlid gathering' and that they believe that Mawlid can be celebrated anytime...

In fact, the background of the Kanhaiya/Janmashtami quote that comes in the next question [#22] is about celebrating 'anytime'. This is on page 141 of Barāhīn as shown concerning standing in reverence during Mawlid or what is known as *qiyām*:



...or for this reason that his ﷺ pure soul, which is in the world of souls arrives to this world of beholding [*áālam e shahādat*] and the qiyām, the standing is to show respect to it – this is also sheer stupidity. Because standing up on this basis should be during the moment of his birth – now, where does such birth occur every day repeatedly?

Thus, repeating the birthday [of the Prophet ﷺ] is similar to the gathering[586] of hindus, celebrating the birthday of Kanhaiya;[587] or similar to the Rafidis who enact the story of the martyrdom of Ahl al-Bayt every year; [we seek Allah's refuge] ma'adhAllah! This would be identical to play-acting [*sāg*] the birth of the Prophet ﷺ, and this ugly act is in itself worthy of blame, forbidden and sin [*lawm, ĥarām, fisq*]. Rather, these people are worse than those communities[588] because, they do it on a specific date, and here they have no restriction - they do these innovations whenever they like. There is no example of such a thing in the sharīáh, that is to take a hypothetical basis and act upon it in reality; rather this is ĥarām in sharīáh...

Deobandis are quite inventive in explanations, and I am sure there will be another peroration, with a few choice abuses thrown at us – similar to the circus in the next answer by Khalīl himself; non-Deobandis can clearly see that Khalīl's mention of Kanhaiya was in the context of celebrating 'anytime' and in Answer #21, he says that there is no restriction on remembrance of the birth of the Prophet ﷺ.

Khalīl Aĥmad, of course has a different fairy tale to justify this deplorable comment. These are not half-truths or cop-outs; these are brazen lies – it is this tower of falsehood which is the pride of Deoband, the triumph of Deoband and the purported 'refutation' of *Ĥusām al-Haramayn*. Even if the scholars of the Ĥaramayn would have explicitly withdrawn their endorsements based on this pack of lies, why should it be surprising? The fact remains that none of them withdrew their endorsement. *Muhannad* was attested by the *crème de la crème* of Deobandi scholarship; and its author is their prominent *muĥaddith*, the author of *Badhl al-Maj'hūd*...

إذا كان الغراب دليل قوم ۞ سيهديهم طريق الهالكين

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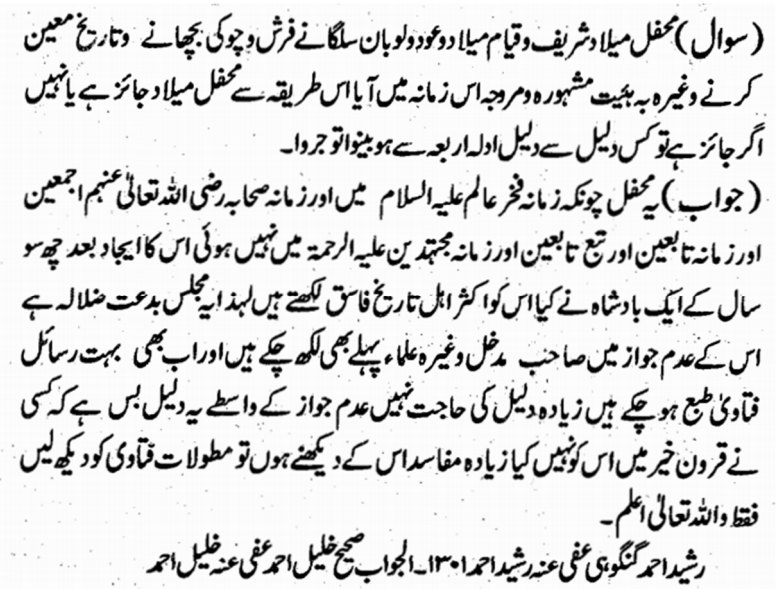
[586] *sāñg* means a play, a show. *sāg banānā* means: to arrange a play for entertainment. Hindus make such tableaux and plays, commemorating the birth of Krishna - who according to their mythology was born in a dungeon and known as Kanhaiya.

[587] Krishna, a mythical figure, whom Hindus consider as their god.

[588] It is worse than Hindus celebrating and Rāfiđīs.

Deobandis may claim that Khalīl was talking about ***permissible mawlid*** in *Muhannad* and he talks about ***impermissible mawlid*** in *Barāhīn*. Let us leave the verbose, convoluted passages of *Barāhīn* and reach for short and straighforward fatāwā elsewhere. In *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah*:

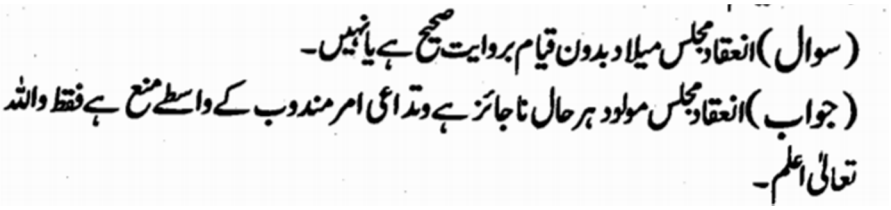

(سوال) محفل میلاد شریف وقیام میلاد وعود ولوبان سلگانے فرش وچوکی بچھانے وتاریخ معین کرنے وغیرہ بہ ہیئت مشہورہ ومروجہ اس زمانہ میں آیا اس طریقہ سے محفل میلاد جائز ہے یا نہیں اگر جائز ہے تو کس دلیل سے دلیل اولہ اربعہ سے ہو بینوا توجروا۔
(جواب) یہ محفل چونکہ زمانہ فخر عالم علیہ السلام میں اور زمانہ صحابہ رضی اللہ تعالیٰ عنہم اجمعین اور زمانہ تابعین اور تبع تابعین اور زمانہ مجتہدین علیہ الرحمۃ میں نہیں ہوئی اس کا ایجاد بعد چھ سو سال کے ایک بادشاہ نے کیا اس کو اکثر اہل تاریخ فاسق لکھتے ہیں لہذا یہ مجلس بدعت ضلالہ ہے اس کے عدم جواز میں صاحب مدخل وغیرہ علماء پہلے بھی لکھ چکے ہیں اور اب بھی بہت رسائل فتاویٰ طبع ہو چکے ہیں زیادہ دلیل کی حاجت نہیں عدم جواز کے واسطے یہ دلیل بس ہے کہ کسی نے قرون خیر میں اس کو نہیں کیا زیادہ مفاسد اس کے دیکھنے ہوں تو مطولات فتاوی کو دیکھ لیں فقط واللہ تعالیٰ اعلم۔
رشید احمد گنگوہی عفی عنہ رشید احمد ۱۳۰۱۔ الجواب صحیح خلیل احمد عفی عنہ خلیل احمد

Question: Gathering of mawlid, standing up during mawlid, to burn incense and aloe; put carpets and benches; to fix a date and other such things which are famous in our times: is it permissible to celebrate mawlid in this fashion or not? If it is permissible, what is the proof, and the proof should be from the four categories.

Answer: This kind of a gathering was not present in the time of the Pride of the World [RasūlAllāh ﷺ] nor during the times of companions ﷺ, nor their followers or their followers[589] and the mujtahid imāms. This was innovated six hundred years later by a king about whom most historians write that he was corrupt, a transgressor [*fāsiq*]. Therefore this kind of a gathering is a heretical innovation [*bidáh đalālah*]. The author of *Madkhal* and others have written against its permissibility and many books and fatāwā are being written even to this day. There is no need to look further for evidence; the sufficient proof for its impermissibility is in the fact that nobody has celebrated it in the righteous centuries; if you want to see more about its corruption, you can look up lengthy fatāwā [against it]. Allāh táālā knows best.[590]

Khalīl Aĥmad's attestation: The answer is correct.

This fatwā makes no pretense or splits hairs – it clearly says that it was a reprehensible innovation of a corrupt king. The interesting part of this fatwā is that Khalīl Aĥmad has attested it and you have seen his tune in *Muhannad*. In another fatwā, which specifies celebration of mawlid without *qiyām*.


(سوال) انعقاد مجلس میلاد بدون قیام بروایت صحیح ہے یا نہیں۔
(جواب) انعقاد مجلس مولود ہر حال ناجائز ہے وتداعی امر مندوب کے واسطے منع ہے فقط واللہ تعالیٰ اعلم۔

Question: Arranging a gathering to celebrate a mawlid without qiyām, and with only authentic narrations; is it permissible or not?

Answer: Arranging a gathering to celebrate mawlid is impermissible in any manner; and to invite people for a recommended action is not allowed.[591]

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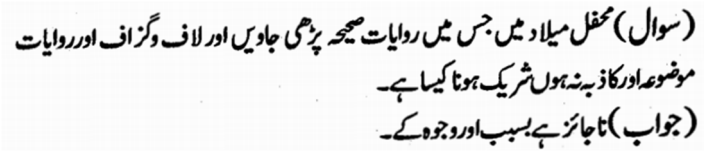
[589] *ṣaĥābah, tābiýīn, tabá al-tābiýīn*.

[590] *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah*, p254 (new edition).

[591] Ibid. p270.

This is reiterated here:


(سوال) محفل میلاد میں جس میں روایات صحیحہ پڑھی جاویں اور لاف وگزاف اور روایات موضوعہ اور کاذبہ نہ ہوں شریک ہونا کیسا ہے۔
(جواب) ناجائز ہے بسبب اور وجوہ کے۔

Question: Is it permissible to attend a gathering of mawlid in which only authentic narrations are retold; where there is no frivolity, nor mention of fabricated and false narrations?

Answer: It is not permissible, due to other reasons.[592]

Some more fatāwā against Mawlid are shown in the Appendices. Even if attestations exist, what is the credibility of such a work which has lies and further retractions? The final position of Khalīl according to Manżūr Númānī is that he retracted from anti-Wahābī comments in *Muhannad*; which effectively nullifies all those endorsements – then why quote *Muhannad* and its attestations?

~

A Quick Comparison of Ĥusām and Muhannad

		Husam al-Ĥaramayn	Muhannad
1	Description of the Book	**Fatwā Portion of a Book and Endorsements**	**Answers to 26 Questions and Endorsements**
2	Author	Fatwā by **Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān** (1272-1340 / 1856-1921)	Answers by **Khalīl Aĥmad Ambethwi** (1269-1346 / 1852-1927)
3	Year of Writing	**21st Dhi'l Ĥijjah 1323**	**18th Shawwāl 1325**
4	Endorsements	**1323-1324**	**1328-1329**
5	Year of Publication	**1325**	**Impossible before 1329** Because of inclusion of excerpts from Sayyid Barzanji's book signed Rabīý al-Awwal 1329
6	Questioner	**This fatwā was Alahazrat's initiative**	**Anonymous** No description or names of who put forth these questions even though Mazhar Ĥusayn cites Ĥusayn Madani's claim that "prominent scholars of Ĥaramayn posed these questions"
7	Endorsements	**33 scholars from both sanctuaries**	**Purportedly, 6 scholars from both sanctuaries**

[592] Ibid. p271.

		Husam al-Ĥaramayn	Muhannad
8	Names of Endorsers from Makkah	**1. Shaykh Muĥammad Saýīd BāBuşayl** **2. Shaykh Aĥmad Abu'l Khayr Mīrdād** **3. Shaykh Şāliĥ Kamāl** **4. Shaykh Álī ibn Şiddīq Kamāl** **5. Shaykh Ábd al-Ĥaqq Ilāhabādī** **6. Shaykh Ismāýīl Khalīl** **7. Shaykh Abū Ĥusayn Marzūqī** **8. Shaykh Úmar ibn Abū Bakr BāJunayd** **9. Shaykh Áābid ibn Ĥusayn Mālikī** **10. Shaykh Álī ibn Ĥusayn Mālikī** **11. Shaykh Jamāl ibn Muhammad** **12. Shaykh As'ád Dahhān** **13. Shaykh Ábd al-Raĥmān Dahhān** **14. Shaykh Yūsuf Afghānī** **15. Shaykh Aĥmad Makki Imdādī** **16. Shaykh Muĥammad Yūsuf Khayyāţ** **17. Shaykh Muĥammad Şāliĥ BāFađl** **18. Shaykh Ábd al-Karīm Dāghistānī** **19. Shaykh Saýīd Yamānī** **20. Shaykh Ĥāmid Jaddāwī**	**1. Shaykh Muĥammad Saýīd BaBuşayl** **2. Aĥmad Rashīd Khān Nawwāb al-Ĥanafī** **3. Muĥibbuddīn Muhājir Makkī** **4. Muĥammad Şiddīq Afghānī Muhājir Makkī** The following two scholars apparently withdrew their endorsement to *Muhannad*, according to Khalīl Aĥmad himself, but names are still included **Shaykh Áābid ibn Ĥusayn Mālikī** **Shaykh Álī ibn Ĥusayn Mālikī**
9	Names of Endorsers from Madīnah	**1. Muftī Tājuddīn Ilyās** **2. Shaykh Úthmān Dāghistānī** **3. Shaykh Sayyid Aĥmad Jazāyirī** **4. Shaykh Khalīl Ibrāhīm Kharbūtī** **5. Shaykh Sayyid Muĥammad Saýīd** **6. Shaykh Muĥammad Úmarī** **7. Shaykh Ábbās Riđwān** **8. Shaykh Úmar ibn Ĥamdān Maĥrisi** **9. Shaykh Sayyid Muĥammad Dīdāwī** **10. Shaykh Muĥammad Sūsī Khiyārī** **11. Shaykh Sayyid Aĥmad Barzanjī** **12. Shaykh Muĥammad Azīz Wazīr** **13. Shaykh Ábd al-Qādir Tawfīq Shalbī**	**1. Shaykh Sayyid Aĥmad Barzanjī** **2. Aĥmad ibn Muĥammad al-Shanqīţī Maliki**
10	Endorsers from Makkah in common	Not Applicable as this was written prior to *Muhannad*.	**ONLY ONE** **Shaykh Muĥammad Saýīd BaBuşayl**

		Husam al-Ĥaramayn	Muhannad
11	Endorsers from Madīnah In common	Not Applicable as this was written prior to *Muhannad*.	**ONLY ONE** **Shaykh Sayyid Aĥmad Barzanjī**
12	Scholars who withdrew their endorsement	None of the above scholars has **withdrawn** any attestation. Shaykh Barzanji criticised an opinion on "Knowledge of the Five" in a separate book ***Ghāyatu'l Ma'mūl***, in which he mentioned the attestation of *Ĥusām* a **second time**, but did not rescind it. However, numerous proofs against his position can be found in ***Jalā'a al-Qulūb*** by Shaykh Muĥammad Kattani and which is in agreement with ***Dawlah al-Makkiyyah***.	**1. Shaykh Áābid ibn Ĥusayn Mālikī** **2. Shaykh Álī ibn Ĥusayn Mālikī**
13	Number of scholars mentioned above resident in either of the two sanctuaries	All **33 scholars** are well-known resident scholars; most of them are muftīs and teachers belonging to all the four madh'habs. Shaykh **Ábd al-Ĥaqq Ilāhabādī**, migrated to Makkah in 1283; Alahazrat is 20 years younger to him and he was the teacher of many úlamā in Makkah.	Only two scholars mentioned above – one in each Ĥarām – are well-known. The endorsement of two other prominent scholars the Mālikī brothers is inadmissible because they took back the endorsements according to Khalīl himself. **Aĥmad Rashīd, Muĥibbuddīn** and **Şiddīq Afghānī:** all three are migrants – notably absent is Shaykh Ábd al-Ĥaqq Ilāhabādī, even though he is a prominent khalifah of Haji Imdādullāh Makki. The second endorsement from Madīnah, of **Shaykh Shanqiti** is obvious – he attests beliefs which Deobandis deem shirk such as the soul of RasūlAllāh to be present in homes of Muslims and standing in respect – *qiyam* in Mawlid, etc.
14	Attestations by Induction	All attestations are direct and meant for the fatwā of Alahazrat.	Khalīl Aĥmad has included 23 endorsements for the book of Shaykh Barzanji and claims that these are attestations for his book by induction. Perhaps Keller can elucidate more on *Association Fallacy* in this regard.
15	Names of Endorsers from India	Not Applicable. This fatwā was attested only by scholars of Ĥaramayn. Later, Mawlānā Hashmat Álī obtained attestations of **268** scholars in the subcontinent and published as a separate book titled ***Sawārim al-Hindiyyah*** but this was after the passing of Alahazrat. Many scholars who signed are neither students of Alahazrat, nor his disciples.	According to the author, attestations for the book were first solicited in India and thereafter sent to Ĥaramayn, Syria and Egypt. Almost all Indians who endorsed it are Deobandis themselves, including **Ashraf Álī Thānawī,** one of the co-defendants against ***Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*** and **Mahmud Ĥasan Deobandi** and a son of **Qāsim Nānotwī**.

		Husam al-Ĥaramayn	Muhannad
16	Direct references in the book to those who are being refuted	Yes, the fatwā specifically names Deobandis in the fatwā; and all those quotes mentioned in the fatwā attributed to Deobandis can be independently verified. Scans from those books are presented in Appendix C.	In Q23, Alahazrat Imām Aĥmad Raza Khān is mentioned as Al-Baraylawi and this is only direct 'refutation' where Khalīl Aĥmad claims that this fatwā was forged by Alahazrat and slanders him as a master forger. In this answer Khalīl Aĥmad also accuses Alahazrat to be similar to Qādiyānī because, according to Khalīl, Alahazrat claimed Messengership covertly and cloaked it under being Mujaddid. We invite Deobandis to substantiate this claim and if it is not found anywhere, what is the status of *Muhannad* and its author?
17	Direct references to the fatwā and takfīr in endorsements	Yes, almost all endorsements directly endorse takfīr – some of them name the scholars of Deoband explicitly and call them kāfirs.	No endorsement by any of the four-five scholars in Ĥaramayn mentions the takfīr or the withdrawal of such takfīr.

Khalīl Aĥmad claims in *Muhannad* that Alahazrat forged that fatwā of *wuqūú* by Gangohī – even though Mawlānā Ghulām Dastagīr had already apprised scholars of Ĥaramayn in 1307/08; that putrid fatwā and its refutation was published in India in the lifetime of the author by others and he never denied it. Even if that fatwā is denied by Deobandis, is it fair to accuse Alahazrat of forging that fatwā? Did any Deobandi accuse Alahazrat of forgery when Gangohī was alive, and if not, why not?

Deobandis published 'excerpts' of works attributed to Alahazrat's forefathers and shaykhs; when Alahazrat challenged them to prove it, they kept silent; but shamelessly continue to publish those things. In one such Deobandi forgery, they mentioned the date on the seal of Alahazrat's father as 1301, four years after his demise – Alahazrat mentioned this in *Ab'hās e Akhīrah* and confronted Thānawī, but Thānawī ignored it – the same shamelessness, the hallmark of Deoband that incites Khalīl Aĥmad to make this accusation without any proof. He made an accusation that Alahazrat claimed covert prophethood like Qādiyānī even though, it was Qāsim Nānotwī, whose book emboldens the Qādiyānī heresy, when Nānotwī claims that "even if a prophet appears after the time of RasūlAllāh ﷺ, it won't have any effect on the finality of his prophethood".

By Allāh! If Deobandis believe in Judgement Day, let them show us any book or fatwā of Alahazrat which proves that he claimed prophethood covertly – if you cannot, you have disproved the pack of lies once again – that which is named *Muhannad* is nothing but broken stump of a lath sword.

Contemporary Deobandis were jumping up like rabid kangaroos challenging us to show that accursed fatwā of Gangohī – and we not only showed it, but also demonstrated that it is certainly Gangohī's by handwriting analysis – it was this fatwā upon which Sunni scholars made takfīr, and they would have not made takfīr if Gangohī had only denied that the fatwā was his; Gangohī had 15 years to retract or deny that fatwā, which he did not, despite public refutations – but still Khalīl accuses Alahazrat of forgery. We can only wait for Judgement day when the wicked will get their due recompense.

IX. OBITER DICTA

In this chapter, we discuss a few sidenotes left out to avoid digression from the main argument.

Sources

> When we hear something, or read it from a single source, we tend to accept such knowledge because it usually works.

How many 'sources' did Keller consult for his criticism of Alahazrat's fatāwā? Or was it just the opinion of his Deobandi murids and acquaintances, because it usually works? Also, does this mean that if we quote one source, such as Imam Abu'l Ĥasan al-Asháŕī, that such a citation becomes unreliable?

Keller is plowing towards his eventual insinuation – fed by Deobandis obviously – that the scholars of Ĥaramayn were ignorant and were deceived by the Alahazrat's fatwā and foolishly signed *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*, and then when they realised their blunder, they 'retracted' from their folly and exonerated Deobandis. It has been demonstrated that Keller does not read the sources he mentions.

~

Pretext

> [6] "Pretext" meaning such as the existence of an apparently contradictory scriptural evidence that to the person disagreeing seems to give grounds to do so.

Keller tries to convince us that the translation of *shub'ha* is *pretext* even though it has strong negative connotations and according to the dictionary:

- a fictitious reason given in order to conceal the real one
- a specious excuse; pretence
- something that is put forward to conceal a true purpose or object; an ostensible reason; excuse
- the misleading appearance or behavior assumed with this intention[593]

Let us go back to the statement where this trap is laid:

> and there is no pretext (shubha) for disagreement about it;[6]

A note is added here to explain what pretext means; s*hubha* in this context should be translated as misconception or misapprehension; *pretext* means to look for a fictitious reason to rule that person a kāfir. If Keller did not know this, he would not have clarified in a footnote, the explanation which fits the meaning of 'misconception' – pretext is introduced here to be misused later when the trap is sprung:

[593] http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/pretext.

> Third, the only substantive **pretext** for takfir between them is an issue…
>
> …only one issue remains that offers either side a **pretext** for takfir;

Keller has already made it clear that he does not know of any Deobandi takfir – and thus the 'pretext' is only used by Sunni scholars; the plural is used for a politically correct phrase. In an undertone, he accuses Sunni scholars of using a 'pretext' for making takfir – that is, using a specious excuse to make takfir as he casually mentions later:

> …in which he condemned Thanwi, Saharanpuri, and other Deobandis—without referring to the context of their remarks, or what they had been written in reply to—and said:

While people do not consciously put these things together, it is framed subconsciously, and has a considerable influence on the consequent opinion formed about the subject.

~

Ismāýīl Dihlawī is a Deobandī

> So those who say, as did some of the Deobandis, that Allah's creating a "like" is hypothetically possible,[22] are correct,

In endnote #22, Keller cites Ismāýīl Dihlawī's – 'Deobandi' – notorious passage which was the spark that set fire to the nation. Keller has no qualms about repeating such *jahālah* and *đalālah*, but he will solemnly sermonise: "The excellence of a man's Islam includes leaving what does not concern him."

~

Citation from Imām Sanūsī's Kubrā

In the endnote #20 Keller writes:

> "In which he followed," according to Ahmad Reza, "the sheikh of his sect, Isma'il al-Dahlawi [d. 1246/1830]" (*Husam al-Haramayn* (c00), 19), but which in reality other major Muslim scholastic theologians (mutakallimun) had espoused before them, such as Imam Muhammad ibn Yusuf al-Sanusi (d. 895/1490) of the Ash'ari school of *'aqida* on pages 455, 456, and 465 of his *'Umda ahl al-tawfiq wa al-tasdid* (c00), one of the most important reference works of the school.

One should not be fooled by Keller's citing the name of Sanūsī's *Kubrā* in full; he does not seem to have read the book at all, in fact not even the very passage he cites! He is the classic *Ĥātibu'l layl* – the groper in the dark, who doesn't know what he has picked up. If Keller has indeed read it, he has not understood it; and if he has understood it, he has wilfully and brazenly lied to deceive common folk who may never verify these references; simple Muslims will believe these lies based on his reputation as a sufi and a 'scholar'.

Imām Sanūsī actually, stated the opposite of what Keller claims; here is a translation from page 455:

> Considering the second case,[594] [implying] contradiction in His speech – Glorified and Exalted is He – to endorse a liar [as truthful] is itself a lie; and falsehood is *muĥāl* for Him ﷻ; because everything that He has informed is according to His Knowledge and therefore truth – and the forfeiture [of truth] would mean forfeiture of Knowledge that necessitates it; and this is *muĥāl* as you know already that it is *wājib*.[595]

On page 456, Imām Sanūsī reiterates:

> If you say: We have seen amongst us, someone who knows [about something] can give false information about it. We reply: our argument is about the very [act] of giving information – not about words themselves, because such an attribute for the Creator ﷻ is impossible [*mustaĥīl*].

Further on the same page:

> Also, if we could attribute the Creator ﷻ with falsehood, and all His Attributes are Pre-eternal [*qadīmah*]; which would mean that Truth is impossible [*istiĥālah*] for Him – even though it is established[596] that He is attributed with Truth because Knowledge is a necessary attribute for Allāh táālā; thus it would necessitate [Truth as] impossible even though you know that Truth is validated [as a necessary attribute]. [597]

This last paragraph above is one of the strongest proof against the *Kazzabiyyah*, and Keller, their post-modern proponent. What Imām Sanūsī says above is essentially:

1. All attributes of Allāh are pre-eternal
2. If Allah táālā could be attributed with falsehood,
3. It would mean falsehood is pre-eternal
4. Which would mean Truth is *muĥāl* for Him
5. But you know that Truth is His Attribute
6. Ergo, it is *muĥāl* to attribute Him with falsehood

Concerning page 465, it is stupidity to claim proof for *imkān kadhib* of Allāh táālā – that discussion is not about Allāh táālā; I have included the screenshot of that page and anybody can have it verified by those who can read Arabic. When Keller is incapable of understanding the very passages he quotes, it is futile to expect him to know the principles of kalām, which stipulate that whenever *mustaĥīl* is mentioned without qualification, it refers to *mustaĥīl dhātī* by default.

~

[594] Which is information by Divine Speech – that is, revelation.

[595] That is among the fundamental precepts is to know that the Attribute of Knowledge is *wājib* and its opposite, absence of knowledge is *muĥāl*; thus if truth is absent, it would mean knowledge is absent.

[596] *ṣiĥĥati ittiṣāfihi*: it is correct and validated to attribute Him with Truth.

[597] *Úmdah Ahl al-Tawfīq wa't Tasdīd*, Kubrā of Sanūsī, p455.

The Fatwā of Gangohī

Keller follows the propaganda of Deobandis:

> Gangohī explicitly states in a fatwa that "whoever believes or states that Allah Most High lies is without a doubt an accursed unbeliever who contradicts the Qur'an, the sunna, and the consensus of the Umma" (*al-Muhannad 'ala al-mufannad* (c00) 72).

Does it mean that it is impossible for Gangohī to contradict this? Do you people have no shame? It is not impossible for Allāh táālā to lie, but impossible for your pathetic selves?

Suppose a person has told a hundred truths, and commits one blasphemy which is proven – and the Qāđī rules on that one blasphemy, only an idiot of a Qāđī will exempt the accused says in his defence: "Look at the hundred truths, I have said..."

The fatwā of Gangohī surfaced in 1308,[598] and pointing to his other fatwā is not the way to deny it; it was publicly debated and refuted – Gangohī should have denied that fatwā by merely saying that "it is not my fatwā" in the fifteen years until his death. If he had even whispered such a statement, his followers would have made a huge show of it; Alahazrat's fatwā of takfīr in *Mustanad* was in 1320, and Gangohī died in 1323. Why did he not say that the fatwā was not his after *Mustanad* – nor did any of his followers accuse him of 'forgery' in those 3 years?

We have exhibited the photograph of that original fatwā in his own writing, and upon which his own seal is affixed, in Appendix C.

~

Keller Emulates the Speech of Hypocrites

Keller has no shame or adab of the noble Messenger ﷺ and blissfully chirps like a munafiq that the Prophet ﷺ did not know 'what will be done with him.' If he had reverence in his heart, he would have explained the meaning of this ĥadīth, but not Keller –this sufi won't mind even if there is a potential danger of a commoner taking it literally. In endnote #29, he says:

> The first hadith is found in Bukhari with the wording "By Allah, I do not know, and I am the Messenger of Allah, what shall be done with me" (Bukhari (c00), 9.33: 7003). The author was unable to identify the other two references cited here, though similar examples abound in the Qur'an and sunna.

We have explained the ĥadīth of Bukhārī earlier and when this was said, the Jews and hypocrites exulted in it – so Allāh táālā revealed the verses and showed His beloved where everybody shall be and that the Prophet ﷺ shall have the Extolled Station [*maqām maĥmūd*]. Concerning the other 'two references,' which Keller does not furnish – the first is a lie attributed to Shaykh Ábd al-Ĥaqq, by Khalīl and his master Rashīd as we have explained earlier. Ibn Ĥajar al-Ásqalānī has said that the "report is baseless," and Ibn Ĥajar al-Makki in *Afđal al-Qirā* says: "its chain of transmission is unknown."

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[598] It is not clear when it is written – whether 1307/08; or if it is mentioned somewhere, I will update this, *in-shā'Allāh*.

If Keller omitted the reference deliberately in full knowledge, it is dishonesty and a lie. Or, if he genuinely did not know the reference, it exposes the fact that he had not seen *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn* by the time he wrote his article; yet, he has no compunction to criticise it – I would strongly recommend the tafsīr of v188, Sūrah Aāl Ímrān,[599] if Keller's taşawwuf has any place for it. Alahazrat has himself mentioned this reference in *Ĥusām* on page 25 and said:

> He demands scriptural proof for the knowledge of Muĥammad ﷺ, and he is not satisfied unless that text [*naşş*] is absolute [*qaţýī*]; however, when he comes to prove the lack of his ﷺ knowledge in this very discussion, on page 46, six lines above this despicable kufr,[600] he holds on to a false ĥadīth, which has no basis in religion. And he falsely attributes the narration to [a scholar] who actually refuted it!
>
> [Khalīl says:] Ábd al-Ĥaqq reports [that it is narrated] from RasūlAllāh ﷺ that he said: "I do not know what is behind this wall". Even though, the shaykh (may Allāh sanctify his secret) said in his *Madārij al-Nubuwwah*: If one poses an objection here that it has been reported that RasūlAllāh said: "I am a slave and I do not know what is behind this wall." The answer to this objection is **that the statement has no basis and the report is not authentic**. Look how he uses "*Do not approach prayer*" for his proof, and omits "*as long as you are drunk*."

If Keller was sincere, he should have at least read the fatwā in *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*, which is hardly a few pages,[601] before freely slandering it and pompously pointing out the lack of context etc. ***How did he know about the lack of context when he has not even read it?***

Keller might be genuinely ignorant about the latter two references, but his claim that 'examples abound in the Qur'ān and sunna' can be uttered only by a *munafiq* – not even an illiterate Muslim will agree with such an interpretation – it is the disease in their hearts and symptoms of that malady is apparent in their speech and writing, as Sayyidi Ibn Áţāyillāh has said:

> That which left concealed in the secret recesses of the heart will eventually become apparent and exposed[602]

Ibn Ajibah says in its commentary that whatever good or bad traits reside in the heart, their effect will be seen externally; elsewhere, he quotes from *Mabāĥith al-Aşliyyah*:

> **والأدب الظاهر للعيان ◈ دلالة الباطن في الإنسان**
>
> Proper etiquette that is externally visible ◈ is an index of the innermost secrets of a man

Uttering Blasphemies Repeatedly

One of the points Keller made was that the Deobandis made those statements "in the heat of argument," but those statements were printed and defended, and long after those who said it are dead and have become dust, those blasphemies are perpetuated by their followers. The dead may not be in our dock, but the blasphemies are still thriving.

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[599] لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَآ أَتَوا۟ وَّيُحِبُّونَ أَن يُحْمَدُوا۟ بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوا۟ فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّهُم بِمَفَازَةٍ مِّنَ ٱلْعَذَابِ ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

[600] That is the blasphemous passage of *Barāhin Qāţiáh* denigrating the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

[601] The Arabic text in the original edition is a little over twelve pages of A5 size and approximately 21 lines on each page.

[602] *Ĥikam*, #28.

Therefore, Ibn Áābidīn said:

> We have mentioned earlier, that if a Muslim keeps repeating the same [blasphemous thing] and is well-known for holding this belief and invites others to believe in it, he shall be executed. Neither is his repentance accepted, nor is his Islām – [he is] like a zindīq and there is no difference between [such a] Muslim and a dhimmi, because we are talking about someone who keeps repeating it and is known for saying such things, which proves that he believes in it and it is a manifestation of the filth within as he spreads mischief on earth. The repentance of such a person is merely a camouflage to save his own skin; and by executing such a person, we ward off his harm directed against RasūlAllāh ﷺ and his ummah – because those with weak faith may go astray because of him.[603]

~

The Ignorant Sufi

Ábd al-Rauūf Munāwī in his *Irghām Awliyā'a al-Shayţān* said citing Imām Mālik: "One who takes to taşawwuf without learning fiqh properly will become a zindiq; and one who learns only fiqh without taşawwuf will become a fāsiq."[604] Keller thinks that he can decide which knowledge is beneficial and which is not; he says in endnote #26:

> for although knowledge in general ennobles its possessor, knowing many things confers little distinction upon anyone besides their Maker.

Even though this note is upon a citation from Alahazrat's *Dawlah*, his circumlocution is only to prove what Thānawī has already said in his blasphemy. What is the basis for such a claim? And how did he arrive at this conclusion? Keller is saying this only to deny the *mā kāna wa mā yakūn* mentioned in the Ĥadīth by aping the Deobandis and regurgitating their ideas – this he does by dispraising knowledge. If 'knowing many things' did not confer distinction, then why is knowledge praised in the Qur'ān?

وَإِنَّهُۥ لَذُو عِلْمٍ لِّمَا عَلَّمْنَٰهُ

Verily, he was a person of knowledge, because of what We had taught him.[605]

وَبَشَّرُوهُ بِغُلَٰمٍ عَلِيمٍ

And [they] gave him glad tidings of a knowledgeable boy.[606]

وَعَلَّمْنَٰهُ مِن لَّدُنَّا عِلْمًا

And We taught him [a special kind of] knowledge by Our Endowment.[607]

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[603] *Tanbīh*, p354.

[604] Cf. *Jalā'a al-Qulūb* of Sayyidī Kattānī, 1/38.

[605] Sūrah Yūsuf, 12:68.

[606] Sūrah Al-Dhāriyāt, 51:28.

[607] Sūrah Al-Kahf, 18:65. Most tafsirs say that it is knowledge of the unseen.

> Whether a rock has fallen down on the other side of the moon, for example, concerns no one except Allah,

Where did he pull that from? How does Keller know this? What if Allāh táālā has created some beings on the other side of the moon and that particular rock falling down will lead to a chain of events – so how does Keller know that it concerns NO ONE except Allāh? Has he been informed of this – if not, why does he say such things? Why does he not act upon the Ĥadīth himself?

> "The excellence of a man's Islam includes leaving what does not concern him"

Keller says:

> It is a religious shortcoming for a Muslim to even care about such things—which upon reflection, include most particulars of created being,

There are a number of things informed by RasūlAllāh ﷺ; *mā kāna wa mā yakūn;* and Kattānī mentions a ṣaĤīĤ narration where RasūlAllāh said: "Ask me whatever you want," then according to Keller's weird theology, it is a religious shortcoming – *al-íyādhu billāh* – because of such knowledge?

> and there would be no point or honor in Allah's bestowing more than a *part* of His absolute knowledge of particulars upon another.

Keller should read books instead of making such statements; if he dislikes Alahazrat and does not want to read his *Dawlah*, let him read *Jalā'a al-Qulūb* of Sayyid MuĤammad Jaáfar al-Kattānī. If he had read the first part of the latter book, he would have found an excellent discourse on epistemology, and he would probably abstain from making such a stupid statements; because it is absurd unless the 'part' is defined, as in a 'billionth part' for example. Then, Keller could claim:

> and there would be no point or honor in Allah's bestowing more than a **billionth** part of His absolute knowledge of particulars upon another.

If the 'part' is not defined, how can one tell the difference between parts? How does Keller know that "knowledge of whether a rock has fallen down on the other side of the moon" is not included in the 'part'? And if there are two of those 'parts' would that become absolute knowledge and thus impossible?

~

Burning a Straw-Dwarf

Keller talking of the hypothetical possiblity of a 'duplicate' of the Prophet ﷺ says:

> So those who say, as did some of the Deobandis, that Allah's creating a "like" is hypothetically possible,[22] are correct, in the very limited sense that it is logically within Allah's almighty power to do so—**had He not already decided** and declared that He never shall.

It has been discussed earlier; and we are only pointing here that the emphasised portion is Keller's false and imaginary premise. If Deobandis had agreed to this, there would not have been the issue of *imkān kadhib* at all; because this is what Sunni scholars said – now that He has Willed, and declared that He never shall, the claim of 'creating a billion Muĥammad ﷺ' would then be asking for the impossible – otherwise, it would necessitate that what he ***declared*** is false[608] or He did not know that He would change His ***decision***, which would indicate lack of ***knowledge***.

But all these are *muĥāl dhātī* – therefore, the result – that is another prophet after the coming of RasūlAllāh ﷺ is, by transition *muĥāl dhātī*. Keller says that it is *muĥāl araḍī*, but that can be pardoned as he is ignorant of kalām.

See that? That is exactly where the controversy started, but things have a different colours in wonderland.

~

Alahazrat's Fatwā on Imkān Nażīr

In the below fatwā, which is a brief, but an adequate answer Alahazrat does not make *takfīr* of those who insist on *imkān nażīr,* as long as it is not accompanied by blasphemy:

> **Question**: Zayd says that Allāh táālā can create another [person] equal [and similar] to the person of the blessed Messenger ﷺ, but He will not create it because of His Divine Promise. What is the opinion of research scholars about making Zayd an imām in prayer – is it permissible or not?
>
> **Answer**: The Prophet ﷺ has many superlative and special attributes [*faḍāyil-khaṣāyiṣ*] which are impossible to be shared such as:
>
> - the most superior of all prophets
> - the seal of prophets
> - the chief of prophets
> - the first in the creation of Allāh
> - the most superior in the creation of Allāh
> - the first of all intercessors
> - the first whose intercession will be accepted
> - the prophet of all prophets [*nabiy al-anbiyā'a*] ﷺ
>
> If the person [mentioned in the question] was not thinking of this and was considering only the Divine Power and that it is all-encompassing [*úmūm e qudrat*], then it should be explained to him [as above].
>
> In spite of explanation and attempts to make him understand, he is obstinate or arrogant and insists on his own view, he is a heretic; it is certainly not permissible to make him an imām – and it is prohibitively disliked [*makrūh taĥrīmī*] to pray behind him; it is a sin to pray behind him and obligatory to repeat that prayer.

[608] He declared in the Qur'ān that RasūlAllāh ﷺ is the last prophet.

The above ruling holds good only when the aforementioned statement is not due to Wahābism; because Deobandis among Wahābīs have nothing left to be called as Muslims; they utter explicit blasphemies which cannot be favourably explained [*wāziĥ nā qābil e ta'wīl tawhīneñ*] and they are kāfir themselves; and at least those who do not deem them kāfir are also kāfir like them on their account. Scholars of Ĥaramayn have written concerning Deobandis that "whoever doubts in the kufr of this person is also a kāfir".

We seek Allāh's refuge. Allāh táālā knows best.[609]

[609] *Fatāwā Riđawiyyah*, 29/221.

CONCLUSION

"O Prophet! Tell them: If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your family, the wealth that you have amassed, and the business that you are afraid will be ruined, and dwellings that delight you; if any of these are more beloved to you than Allāh and His Messenger, or more precious than striving in the path of Allāh – then await the Wrath of Allah; verily, Allāh does not give way to the contumacious."[610]

Sunnis do not make indiscriminate takfīr; only those who commit blasphemy are ruled kāfir. Particularly, when they are unrepentant and when their blasphemies are published and circulated. Trying to find nuances to exonerate someone from kufr is a noble objective, but detrimental in the case of express and explicit insults. Most fatāwā concerning blasphemy are about one or two instances where a person has uttered a disrespectful statement; but the ruling concerning them is very strict and they are handed severe punishment. What about blasphemies that are written and published? Keller's excuse that those statements were unintentional and hence not kufr, may sound fine for armchair academics who are more worried about their reputation than the faith of common people.

These statements are published and vehemently justified. If those very statements are cited as statement of belief by common people – which will obviously be intentional at that time, will it remain a blasphemy or not? If yes, should they be ruled kāfir or not? If not, what about Keller's own acknowledgement that the statements would be kufr if they were intentional? If they are ruled kāfir, because intention is now found, will there be any warning against those statements? Or will Keller absolve the beliefs of the 'group' even if they believe in such blasphemies? We have quoted Mawlānā Sayyid Aĥmad Kāżmī earlier, who has said:

> I have mentioned presently that the fundamental difference and reasons for the dispute between Deobandis and Ahl as-Sunnah are those passages which are insulting to Allāh táālā and His Messenger ﷺ. Deobandis say that these statements are not disrespectful or insulting – Sunnis say that the insult and denigration in them is explicit...[611]

In the same book he explains the standpoint of Sunni scholars:

> Concerning Takfīr, our methodology has always been that whosoever utters a statement of kufr such that it becomes necessary to rule him kāfir [*iltizām kufr*], we shall not hesitate to rule him a kāfir regardless of what he claims to be: Deobandi, Barelwi, person of the League or Congress,[612] Naturalist or a Nadwī. In this matter, we will not differentiate between friends or enemies – because that is not the way of righteous people. This also does not mean that if a member of the League utters kufr, we will rule the entire League as kāfir – or if

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[610] Sūrah Tawbah, 9:24.

[611] *Al-Ĥaqq al-Mubīn,* p15, Sayyid Aĥmed Saýīd Kāżmī.

[612] This book was written in 1946 prior to partition and the shaykh refers to members of the Muslim League and Indian Congress, two major political parties at that time – there is a subtopic of supporting either parties and the ensuing confusion which led to the creation of Pakistan. We have remained true to this methodology. Prof.Tahir Jhangvī of the organisation *Minhaj al-Quran* is labelled as Barelwi by opponents – and his shenanigans are attributed to Sunnis, even though Ṭāhir himself rejects this label. Sunni scholars did not hesitate to refute him when he stepped out of bounds and in fact, we were the first to refute his antics such as the deplorable kufr-conference at Wembley in 2011; see my other paper *Minhaji Fata Morgana*, also published by Ridawi Press.

one Nadwī does something necessitating kufr upon himself, we cannot rule all Nadwīs as apostates. In fact, we do not make takfīr of those who live in Deoband just because some Deobandis have uttered blasphemies.

We and our elders have said it many times and openly declared this: we do not deem people from Deoband or Lucknow as kāfir indiscriminately. Only those people who have uttered explicit blasphemies and disrespected Allāh táālā and His Messenger ﷺ and who did not repent from those statements, in spite of repeated warnings are ruled kāfir. Also, those who consider those blasphemies as valid and truthful statements [*ĥaqq*] and deem such blasphemers as believers, righteous folk and hail them as their leaders.

Apart from these two kinds of people, we do not make takfīr of anybody who claims to be a Muslim.

It is our duty to keep refuting these blasphemies until people shun them completely. Qāđī Íyāđ has said:

If the person who uttered [such blasphemies] is a person known to be a scholar or a teacher, [a shaykh or a muftī] or a ĥadīth scholar and narrator, or a person in authority or known to be a reliable witness or a well-known jurist – then it is obligatory for whosoever hears [such a thing from him] to expose him and make the public aware of what has been heard from him – and to make people dislike such a person, to bear witness against such a person and what he has said; it is obligatory for scholars and leaders in the Muslim community to repudiate such a person and clearly communicate the kufr of this person and the monstrosity of his ugly speech so that Muslims are safeguarded from the evil of such a person – and the right of the Leader of Messengers ﷺ is well established. Similarly, if that person [who has uttered a blasphemy] is a preacher or a schoolmaster; if this be the things in his heart, then how can he be trusted to teach the love and reverence of RasūlAllāh ﷺ to those in his care or his audience? It is definitely obligatory to publicise the blasphemies of such people – for the right of the Prophet ﷺ and the right of the Sharīáh.[613]

Keller's is a very strange case, he acknowledges that such statements are insulting but still does not deem those who uttered them as kāfir.

~

Istiftā'a

1. Zayd and Amr utter statements that are outwardly insulting to the Prophet ﷺ.
2. Baker acknowledges that such statements are insulting to the Prophet ﷺ in the following words:

> Muslims would have found his words repugnant and unacceptable.
>
> Aside from Amr's artless comparison of the highest of creation with the lowest,

3. Baker has acknowledged that Zayd's statement about the Prophet ﷺ is repugnant and unacceptable to Muslims; he also acknowledges that Amr has compared the Prophet ﷺ with the lowest in the creation.
4. Baker further clarifies that such insults are intolerable when said about one's own father:

> "Few Muslims would suffer such a comparison to be made with their own father, let alone the Emissary of God ﷺ."

[613] *Kitāb al-Shifā*, p371.

5. Baker is known to be a scholar and is aware of books on blasphemy such as Imām Subkī's work. Despite such explicit acknowledgement, Baker does not consider either Zayd or Amr as kāfir.

6. According to Baker, uttering insulting statements is not sufficient for takfīr; the intention to insult the Prophet ﷺ should also be present. He claims the following principle is based on Imām Subkī's opinion:

> Something might be said that while outwardly offensive to Allah or His Messenger ﷺ, was nevertheless intended by the speaker to make a valid point, not as an insult.

7. Baker also claims that even though these are outwardly offensive to the Prophet ﷺ, Zayd and Amr did not say this to insult the Prophet ﷺ; they said such things in the heat of argument; hence it is not kufr.

Are Zayd and Amr Muslims?

Does Baker remain a Muslim? What is the meaning of Imām Ibn Saĥnūn's statement that: "whoever doubts in the kufr of [the blasphemer] or that he shall be punished, has himself committed kufr"?

Is the principle mentioned by Baker valid: that any disrespectful utterance about the Prophet ﷺ is not kufr until the intention of insulting him ﷺ is also present?

والله تعالى أعلم وعلمه أتم وأحكم وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على سيد المرسلين

Appendix A

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF IMĀM AĤMAD RIĐĀ KHĀN

Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān al-Baraylawī ﵀ was born in 1272 (1856) in Bareilly, a city in North India and in a famous family of scholars; his father Mawlānā Naqī Áli Khān and grandfather Riđā Álī Khān were prominent scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah in their time. He studied Islamic sciences in the tutelage of his erudite father. He was a master of many sciences and particularly in Ĥanafī fiqh, he was outstanding among his contemporaries. Even his adversaries have acknowledged that he was peerless in this discipline.

He has many *ijāzahs* or degrees of authorisation in Ĥanafī fiqh, and the most important[614] among them is from the Muftī of Makkah, Shaykh Ábd al-Raĥmān al-Sirāj ibn Ábdullāh al-Sirāj. This chain of transmission reaches Imām Abū Ĥanifah through twenty seven links and in a further four to the Master of all creation, Muĥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ. He has an authorisation of Ĥadīth transmission from the great Meccan scholar, Malik al-Úlamā, Sayyid Aĥmad Zaynī Daĥlān al-Shāfiýī. Imām Aĥmad Riđā is widely known for his refutation of Wahābīs, innovators and libertarian religion-reformers of the early 20th century of the Common Era. *Alahazrat*, meaning the 'Grand Master,' was a common title of respect[615] in the 13th/14th century Hijri. Imām Aĥmad Riđā was called as Alahazrat by his followers as he was the major force against innovators and the leader of Sunni scholars of his time. This title became so famous, that it has almost become a synonym for Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān. Upon his second and eventful visit to the Hejaz in 1323/24 AH, the scholars of the two sanctuaries in Makkah and Madinah were so impressed by his erudition and his efforts to safeguard Ahl as-Sunnah, that prominent scholars hailed him as the Reviver of the Religion.[616] Major scholars in (pre-partition) India agreed that all the qualities required in a Reviver were found in him and thus he is the Mujaddid of the 14th century after the Prophet's ﷺ migration. Imām Aĥmad Riđā referred to himself as 'the slave of the Prophet' ﷺ or *Ábd al-Muşţafā* in Arabic. His skill as a jurist outshone his other abilities and even the corpus of his work is mainly *fatāwā*. Many lengthy books that he has written are usually as a response to questions. Many of his rulings (and more than 150 fatāwā as monographs) were collected, indexed and ordered by the Imām himself and named *Al-Áţāyā al-Nabawiyyah fi'l Fatāwā ar-Riđāwiyyah*, popularly known in the subcontinent as *Fatāwā e Razaviyyah* and has been recently published in Pakistan in 30 volumes.[617]

The following are his most important works:

1. ***Kanz al-Īmān***: An explanatory translation of the Qur'ān in Urdu.

2. ***Mustanad al-Mútamad***: A commentary on the Arabic work ***Al-Mútaqad al-Muntaqad*** by Imām Fađl al-Rasūl al-Badāyūnī [1289/1872]

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[614] According to Alahazrat himself as mentioned in the Preface of *Fatāwā ar-Riđawiyyah*.

[615] Similar to "His Highness," "His Majesty," "His Holiness," etc.

[616] *Mujaddid.* It is related from tradition, that an erudite scholar will appear at the head of every century and revive the religion and clarify doubts and fight innovation.

[617] Initially, it was published in 12 volumes of approximately 800 pages each in quarto size and small sized handwritten text and it is now published in 30 volumes; with two additional volumes for topic and word indexes. This new edition spans approximately 22,000 pages and contains 206 monographs. Along with indexes it is now available as a 33 volume set.

3. ***Jadd al-Mumtār***: A five volume supercommentary on *Radd al-Muĥtār* of Imām Sayyid Muĥammad Amīn Ibn Áābidīn al-Shāmī [1252/1836] which is perhaps the most widely used and relied upon Ĥanafī text of later times.

4. ***Tamhīd e Īmān***: A passionate appeal to Muslims to shun those who disrespect and insult the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and to remember that the basis of faith is love and respect of RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

5. ***Fađl al-Mawhibī fī Máana****: idhā ṣaĥĥa'l ĥadīthu fa huwa madh'habī*: the context and meaning of the saying attributed to Imām Aážam: "When you find a ṣaĥīĥ ĥadīth, that is my madh'hab."

6. ***Dawlah al-Makkiyyah bi'l Māddah al-Ghaybiyyah***: A treatise on the extensiveness of the knowledge of the Prophet ﷺ which he wrote in Makkah in merely eight hours and within two days upon the request of prominent Makkan scholars.

7. ***Amn wa'l Úlā li Nāýiti'l Muṣṭafā bi Dāfiý al-Balā'a***: A treatise in which Alahazrat proved that Muṣṭafā ﷺ is indeed a remover of affliction – refuting those who deny it – by quoting approximately 60 verses and more than 200 ĥadīth and opinions of scholars.

8. ***Dhayl al-Muddáā li Aĥsan al-Wiáā li Ādāb al-Duáā***: Alahazrat wrote a commentary on his father's work on supplication and highlights points that are not found even in classic duáā manuals like *Hiṣn al-Ĥaṣīn*[618] and *Adhkār*.

9. ***Fatāwā al-Ĥaramayn bi Rajafi Nadwah al-Mayn***: A collection of fatāwā refuting the Nadwah and its conglomerate of assorted heretics: Wahabīs, Rāfiđīs and Naturalists.

10. ***Fatāwā al-Āfriqah***: This is a collection of answers to 111 questions on various topics sent by Hājī Ismāýīl from South Africa[619] in three dispatches.

11. ***Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ án Áybi Kadhibun Maqbūĥ***: A masterpiece of kalām, refuting the absurd belief that falsehood is included in the Divine Power of Allāh táālā. Alahazrat was only 35 years old when he wrote this in 1307 AH.

12. ***Radd ar-Rifđah***: Alahazrat explains that not only is inheritance to a Rafiđī impermissible, he explains how the Rafiđī of our time is out of Islām – listing their heresies and the rulings of úlamā concerning Rafiđīs down the ages. Comprehensive refutation of Rawāfiđ.

13. ***Qahr al-Dayyān álā Murtadd bi-Qādiyān***: Mirzā Ghulām of Qādiyān, rose to prominence as a reformer, but thereafter he blasphemed against prophets and claimed to be a prophet himself. A quick and ready guide for the blasphemies and heresies of Mirzā with references from the apostate's own books.

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[618] Imām Muĥammad ibn Muĥammad al-Jazarī [751-833 AH].

[619] In Butha-Buthe, Basutoland, a former British colony. Basutoland gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1966 and was renamed Kingdom of Lesotho, which is now a sovereign country as an enclave within the Republic of South Africa.

14. ***Niým al-Zād li Rawm ad-Đād***: This is an answer to a query on the pronunciation of đād and its phonology. The question is in Persian and Alahazrat has also answered it in Persian.

15. ***Zubdah al-Zakiyyah li Taĥrīmi Sajdah al-Taĥiyyah***: A treatise explaining the ruling that it is impermissible to prostrate to graves and men with the intention of reverence; and polytheism with the intention of worship.

16. ***Kifl al-Faqīh al-Fāhim fī Aĥkāmi Qirtās al-Darāhim***: On his second Ĥajj, Meccan scholars asked him ten questions concerning currency notes, which Alahazrat answered in less than two days.

17. ***Jalī al-Naṣṣ fī Amākin ar-Rukhaṣ***: Certain prohibited things become permissible at certain times and certain conditions; this is known as concession or *rukhṣah*; this is a comprehensive guideline concerning exemptions and concessions.

18. ***Zahr al-Bāsim fī Ĥurmati al-Zakāh álā Banī Hāshim***: Alahazrat explains that it is forbidden to give Zakāt or any other charity to RasūlAllāh's ﷺ family, the Banū Hāshim.

19. ***Barakāt al-Imdād li Ahl al-Istimdād***: When we seek help from Prophets and righteous people, we do that as intercession – and absolute help is from Allāh táālā alone. Alahazrat lists 33 ĥadīth which prove that seeking help[620] from Awliyā'a is permissible.

20. ***Masayil e Samāá***: Listening to music is forbidden, ĥarām. Listening to recitation of chaste poems in praise of Allāh, his Messenger, exhortation toward noble deeds, praise of Awliyā'a without accompanying instruments is considered as permissible by sufis with conditions. This is a treatise on the rules of listening to odes and religious poems.

21. ***Zulāl al-Anqā min Baĥri Sabqah al-Atqā***: This treatise discusses the superiority of Abū Bakr ؓ and the tafsir of the verse: ***wa sa-yujannabuhā al-atqā***, and that it was revealed commending Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ. It is one of Alahazrat's lengthy monographs in more than 200 pages.

22. ***Malfūż***: A collection of sayings of Alahazrat in various gatherings collected and compiled by his son Mawlānā Muṣṭafā Riđā Khān in four parts.

23. ***Ĥājiz al-Baĥrayn al-Wāqī án Jam' as-Ṣalātayn***: This is a comprehensive reply to a question whether it is permissible to combine two prayers in one time due to a valid excuse. Alahazrat explains the Ĥanafī position and proves it from ĥadīth.

24. ***Hād al-Kāf fī Ĥukm ad-Điáāf***: Imām Nawawī has said: "Scholars have agreed that it is permissible to act upon weak ĥadīth in matters of supererogatory deeds or commendations.." In this seminal tract Alahazrat explains the principles and practice concerning weak ĥadīth citing more than sixty ĥadīth and fiqh authorities.

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[620] With the belief that they help only by Allāh's leave and it is a form of intercession.

25. ***Nahy al-Akīd án as-Ṣalāh Warā'a Ádā' al-Taqlīd***: It is not permissible to pray behind those who do not follow one of the four Imams. An extensive discussion and refutation of Anti-Madhhabīs in which Alahazrat quotes numerous Ĥadīth.

26. ***Kawkabah al-Shihābiyyah fī Kufriyyāti Ab al-Wahābiyyah***: Alahazrat listed 70 statements of apostasy in Ismāýīl's books and proved their being kufr by Ĥadīth and fiqh. Deobandis slander Alahazrat and spread lies that he unfairly criticised Ismāýīl.

27. ***Ijāzāh al-Matīnah li Úlamāyi Bakkah wa'l Madīnah***: Alahazrat listed all his authorisations to various úlamā of Makkah and Madīnah. In his authorisations to prominent úlamā he mentions various isnads he has from his masters.

He took the Qādirī path and was initiated in that Sūfī order by Sayyid Aāl e Rasūl al-AĤmadī[621] of Mārahra in 1294.[622] Alahazrat was an ardent lover of the Prophet ﷺ which is evident from his works. He was also a great poet and has written sublime verse in Arabic, Persian and Urdu. His verse in Urdu and Persian is published in two parts named: *Ĥadāyiq e Bakh'shish* meaning 'Gardens of Salvation'. Many of his eulogies and odes are recited, and in particular, the Ode of Salutation or the *Salām* has achieved unparalleled fame and acceptance among Muslims from the subcontinent. The Imām passed away at the age[623] of 67 in 1340 (1921). May Allah táālā have mercy on him and be well pleased with him.

[621] Passed away in 1296/1879. The shaykh was a prominent student of the famous scholar and Mujaddid of his age Shah Ábd al-Ázīz Muĥaddith al-Dihlawī.

[622] Alahazrat himself points this out in a biographical note on his father Mawlānā Naqī Álī Khān, in the preface of his father's book *Sharĥ A-lam Nashraĥ*, that he (Alahazrat) received bayáh and khilāfah on the 5th of Jumādā al-Ūlā 1294/1877 along with his father.

[623] His age according to the lunar calendar is 67 years and four months; and the solar calendar is 65 years and 4 months.

Appendix B

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Ismāýīl Dihlawī: (1193-1246/1779-1831) was born in Muzzafarnagar district, which is in Uttar Pradesh State of today's India. His father Shāh Ábdu'l Ghanī Dihlawī, the youngest son of Shāh Walīyullāh Dihlawī, died very young; and the orphan was brought up by his uncles, Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz Dihlawī, Shāh Ábd al-Qādir and Shāh Rafiýuddīn. He had a rebellious streak and defied his own uncles on issues, who were upset by the behaviour of Ismāýīl.[624] He wrote the book *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān*, which not only introduced Wahābī ideas in India, but also set the precedent for referring to prophets and awliyā'a in an insolent and irreverent manner. Ismāýīl classed the following of imāms [*taqlīd*] as idolatry and this was probably the first anti-madh'hab work in India. Deobandis accuse Imām Ahmed Riđā Khān of being the flag-bearer of takfīr in India, whereas it was Ismāýīl's book which made polytheists of everyone –including himself.[625] The author himself acknowledged the extremism in his book saying that even lesser sins were labelled as polytheism and idolatry.[626] Thereafter he wrote more incendiary works such as *Ṣirāt e Mustaqīm* and *Yak Rozi* – rekindling the Mútazilī belief that falsehood is included in the Divine Power of Allāh táālā. He was refuted by prominent úlamā, including his own cousins; but the foremost among them was Imām Fađl al-Ĥaqq Khayrābādī, who was a student of Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz. Among others who refuted him were Imām Fađl al-Rasūl Badāyūnī and Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān, who refuted his books posthumously. He was killed in Balakot, in Pakhtunkhwa province of today's Pakistan; his followers claim he was killed by a Sikhs and a martyr – and hence call him Ismāýīl *shahīd*.

Rashid Aĥmad Gangohī (1244-1323/1829-1905) was born in Gangoh, a town in Saharanpur district of Uttar Pradesh, India. After his primary education in Gangoh, he went to Delhi in 1261 and studied there under various teachers, notably under Shaykh Mamluk Álī. Maulvi Qāsim Nānotwī was also a student of the shaykh, and thus they became friends and remained together the rest of their lives. In Hadith, Gangohī was the student of the Muhaddith, Shah Abdu'l Ghanī Dihlawi. He became a murid of the Naqshbandi shaykh, Ĥāji Imdādullāh Muhājir Makkī. Rashid Aĥmad was one of the founding fathers of the Deoband school. *Fatāwā Rashidiyyah* and *Makātīb e Rashīdiyyah*[627] are his well-known works. He was an admirer of Ismāýīl Dihlawī and defended his heresies – for example, he too believes that it is intrinsically possible (*imkān e kizb*) for Allāh táālā to lie. He wrote a fatwā that a person who says that falsehood has transpired in the speech of Allāh is not a kāfir, which caused an uproar and Sunni scholars made takfīr of Gangohī because of this fatwā. He also deemed every kind of Mawlid as an impermissible bidáh.

Muĥammad Qāsim Nānotwī: (1248-1297/1832-1880) was born in Nānotah, a town in Saharanpur district, Uttar Pradesh, India. He completed his studies under Shaykh Mamlūk Álī (d.1267 AH) and thereafter studied Ĥadīth together with his friend Rashīd Aĥmad Gangohī under Shaykh Ábd al-Ghanī Dihlawī (d.1295) and became a disciple of Shaykh Imdādullāh Muhājir Makkī (d.1317 AH). He is deemed the founder of the School

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[624] *Arwāĥ e Salāsah*, #73, where an exasperated uncle exclaims: "We were under the impression that he had become a scholar!"

[625] In a bizzarre passage in the book he claimed that there was no Muslim left on earth.

[626] Vide *Arwāĥ e Salāsah.*

[627] Compiled by his disciples; but the material and opinions therein are his own.

of Deoband and according to Deobandi sources,[628] the school was inaugurated on the 15th of Muharram, 1283 (1867). His biographers list a number of works that he has written or annotated. One small book he wrote, *Taĥdhīru'n Nās*, became controversial in which he claimed: "...hypothetically, suppose a new prophet is born after the time of the Prophet ﷺ, even then, there will be no effect on the 'finality' of the prophethood of Sayyidunā Muĥammad ﷺ; [comparatively] if there is [a prophet] among his contemporaries or in another earth; or if it can be supposed even on this very earth, another prophet [after his ﷺ time without affecting his finality]." Scholars ruled him kāfir for this and other such statements in the book.

Khalīl Aĥmad Ambethwi (1269-1346/1852-1927) was born in Ambetha[629] and studied at Deoband. He was the student of Rashīd Aĥmad Gangohī and at his behest, wrote *Barāhīn al-Qāṭiáh* as a refutation of the book *Anwār e Sātiáh* of Mawlānā Ábdu's Samīý Rampūrī, a Sunni scholar who was also a disciple of Ĥājī Imdādullāh Muhājir Makkī, Gangohī's spiritual master. It is in this book that Khalīl Aĥmad Sahāranpūri[630] says that the knowledge of the earth for Satan is proven from documentary evidence and there is no such evidence for such knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ. He also wrote another book in Arabic named *Muhannad* where he denied a number of accusations levelled at him and other elders of Deoband; according to later Deobandis, he retracted from criticism of Wahābīs in *Muhannad*, after Wahābīs captured the Ĥijāz. He is famous as Sahāranfūrī, the author of the Ĥadīth commentary, *Badhl al-Maj'hūd*.

Ashraf Álī Thānawī[631] (1280-1362/1863-1943) graduated from Deoband in 1300 (1883) and Rashīd Aĥmad Gangohī conferred upon him the turban;[632] Qāsim Nānotawi, Maĥmūd al-Ĥasan Deobandi and Yáqūb Nānotawi were among his teachers.[633] He is famous for his translation of the Qur'ān in Urdu; *Bihishti Zeywar*, a fiqh manual and many other works. In 1319, he wrote a fatwā printed as a booklet titled *Ĥifż al-Īmān,* in which he made a statement insulting the Prophet ﷺ, a statement which any native Urdu speaker, even an illiterate, will consider as an insult; in spite of the furore, he justified his statement as valid; even though he permitted altering the passage in *Taghyīr al-Únwān*, he was unrepentant about his previous writing; yet, the passage is not omitted in successive editions, and which continues to be published and defended by his followers to this day.

[628] *Bānī e Deoband*, Sarfaraz Khān Safdar.

[629] Sahāranpūr district, Uttar Pradesh, India.

[630] He is known in the Arab world as *Sahāranfūrī*, or the author *Badhl al-Majhūd,* a commentary on the Ĥadīth compendium Sunan Abū Dawud .

[631] Related to Thānā-Bhawan in Saharanpur District, Uttar Pradesh, India.

[632] *dastār bandī*: this is a graduation ceremony in Islamic schools; and the conferring of the turban signifies that the student is now deemed a graduate.

[633] Muĥammad Akbar Shāh Bukhārī, *Akābir e Úlamā e Deoband*.

Appendix C

OFFENSIVE PASSAGES IN DEOBANDI WORKS

The passages by Deobandis upon which the ruling of kufr was made are given below, without further commentary. See *Preamble to Faith* for a detailed analysis.

Barāhīn al-Qāṭiáh

...rather all the claims of the author[634] will be rejected. The Pride of the World ﷺ has himself said: 'By Allāh, I do not know that which may befall me nor that which may befall you' as mentioned in the Ĥadīth. Shaykh Abdu'l Haq[635] reports [that he said]: 'I do not even know what is behind the wall.'[636] Thus it is also written in *Bahr ar-Rāyiq* and other books concerning the assembly of marriage. Thirdly, if it is superiority that necessitates [being higher in knowledge] then all Muslims should be higher than Satan in knowledge – even if it is a sinner;[637] in fact the author is also superior to Satan; so let the author prove that he has knowledge of unseen equal to that of Satan if not more than him, on account of his [the author] being superior to Satan. The author, according to his own claim is a superior believer, a person of perfect faith, then certainly he is superior to Satan, and therefore he should be more knowledgeable than Satan! We seek Allāh's refuge![638] Such ignorance on the part of the author is surprising, and it also saddening that he utters such an unworthy[639] statement which is far removed from knowledge and reason.

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[634] Ábdu's Samīý Rāmpūrī, author of *Anwār e Sātiáh*.

[635] Ábd al-Ĥaq al-Dihlawī, (958-1052/1551-1642) famous scholar and the most prominent Ĥadīth master in the subcontinent for the past 400 years. He is the author of many books including *Ashiátu al-Lamáāt*, a commentary on *Mishkātu'l Maṣābīĥ* and *Madāriju'n Nubuwwah*, an authoritative biography of the Prophet ﷺ which is very famous in the subcontinent.

[636] Khalīl Aĥmed misquotes and states the opposite of what Shaykh Ábd al-Ĥaq has said. Because, in the first volume of *Madārij* the Shaykh says: "Some people pose an objection on this and say that it has been mentioned in some reports that RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: 'I am a slave and I do not not know what is behind this wall.' **Whereas, this statement is baseless and there is no authentic report of this kind**".

[637] *fāsiq*.

[638] Apparently, Khalīl Aĥmed finds it abhorrent that anyone else can equal Satan in knowledge.

[639] *nā-lāyiq* literally means unworthy, but in usage and idiom it means contemptible, vile, disgraceful.

The outcome: One should ponder, that by looking at the state of Satan and the Angel of Death, [and then] proving such encompassing knowledge of the earth[640] for the Pride of the World,[641] without any scriptural evidence[642] and by fallacious analogy – if this is not polytheism, then which part of faith is it? This extensiveness of knowledge for Satan and the Angel of Death is proven by scriptural proof; where is such scriptural proof for the extensiveness of the knowledge of the Pride of the World, thereby refuting all scriptural proofs, to establish one polytheistic belief?[643]

Ĥifż al-Īmān

If, the attribution of knowledge to his[644] blessed person by Zayd[645] is valid, then it is necessary to inquire – whether he refers to partial knowledge or complete knowledge? If this refers to a part of such knowledge of unseen,[646] then where is the exclusiveness of RasūlAllāh ﷺ in this?[647] Such knowledge is [posessed by] Zayd and Ámr;[648] rather, children and madmen; rather, all animals and quadrupeds also possess [such knowledge].

Because, every person has knowledge of something that is hidden from another; then, it becomes necessary to call everyone a knower of the unseen.[649] And then, if Zayd makes it binding upon himself, that he shall call everyone a knower of unseen, then why does he consider this as an exclusive attribute of prophethood?[650] An attribute in which, there is no exclusivity for believers – not even exclusivity for humans;[651] then, how can this be an exclusive attribute of prophethood?[652] And if one does not consider it binding, then it is necessary to explain the reason for differentiating between a prophet and a non-prophet. And if he refers to all kinds of knowledge such that not even a single thing remains unknown, then the invalidity of such an idea is proven by innumerable narrated[653] and rational proofs.

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[640] *ílm-e-muĥīţ-e-zamīñ.*

[641] *fakhr-e-áālam* meaning RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

[642] *naşş.*

[643] *Barāhīn al-Qāţiáh*, p47, Published by Hashmi Publishers in 1304.

[644] The Prophet ﷺ.

[645] Zayd: a name used for illustration.

[646] *báaz úlūm e ghaybiyyah.*

[647] In Urdu: ***ĥuzūr***; and this is meant to refer to RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

[648] An idiom to say anyone; like it is said in English: 'Tom, Dick and Harry'.

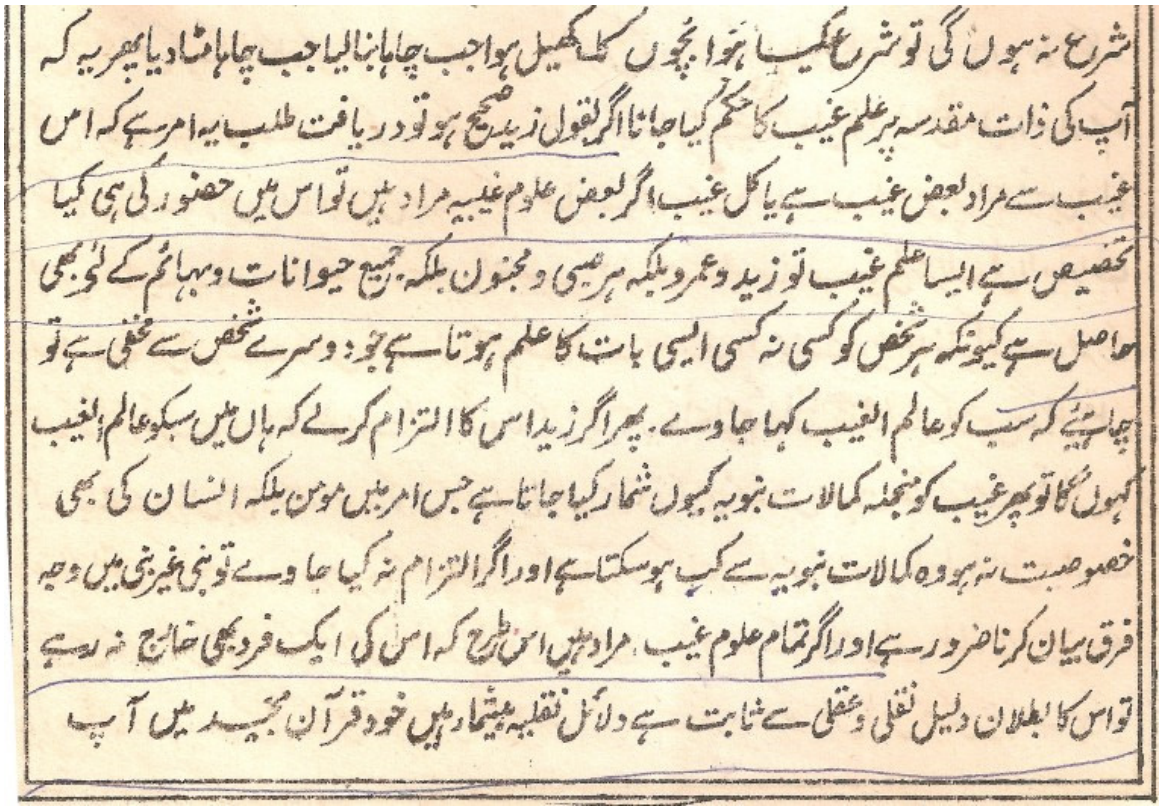
[649] ***áālimu'l ghayb.***

[650] *jumlā kamālāt e anbiyā'a*: that is, attributes that are considered as perfect, praiseworthy, distinguishing them from non-prophets etc.

[651] Thānawī has in the previous paragraph said it explicitly that even animals have similar knowledge; so it is not exclusive to prophets, or even believers, or even humans. In other words, Thānawī says: knowledge is not a trait that can be considered as special for prophets.

[652] Ergo, Prophets do not have knowledge of unseen. Thānawī has said earlier that madmen and animals have knowledge that is similar to that of the Prophet ﷺ. Any possible ambiguity is removed by the rhetorical question he himself asks: '*where is the exclusivity – **takhşīş** – for the Prophet?*'.

[653] *dalīl e naqlī o áqlī se sābit hai.*



Fatwā of Rashīd Gangohī

Even though the third person has committed a mistake in the interpretation of the verses, one should not call him a kāfir or a heretic or a misguided person.[654] Because a great number of scholars and elders accept occurrence of the repealing of the threat of punishment.[655] Thus, Maulavi Aĥmad Ĥasan has described this in his monograph *Tanzīh al-Raĥmān*. Apart from this, those who consider that occurrence of repealing of the threat of punishment as possible,[656] they also believe that such a repealing can occur. It is also clear that *khulf-waýīd*[657] is a specific case and falsehood is a generic case.[658] Because falsehood means, that which is contrary to what has [really] occurred. And that which can be contrary can be either in the case of the threat of punishment or promise of reward or any information;[659] and all of these[660] are categories of falsehood. And the existence of the sub-category necessitates the existence of the main class.[661] If one is a human, then

[654] *magar tā-ham usko kāfir kahnā yā bidátī zall nahiñ kahna chāhiye.*

[655] *wuqūú e khulf e waýīd.*

[656] *mujawwizīn.*

[657] Foregoing the threat of punishment.

[658] That is, *khulf-waýīd* is a subset of *kazib*.

[659] *gāh e waýīd, gāh e waád, gāh e khabar.*

[660] That is: if one acts contrary to carry out the threat [*waýīd*] or contrary to the promise of reward [*waád*] or gives information contrary to the occurrence [*khabar*]; all these are kinds of falsehood.

[661] *wujūd e naú ka wujūd e jins ko mustalzam hai.*

certainly he will also be an animal.[662] **Therefore, the meaning of occurrence of falsehood thus becomes valid,**[663] regardless of whom this concerns. Thus, based upon this, one should not say any harsh word to the third person, because that would necessitate takfīr of elder scholars. Nevertheless, this is a weak statement. However, according to the mad'hab of the elders, it is not permissible for the person with a strong evidence to consider the person with a weak evidence as a heretic. See Ĥanafīs and Shāfiýīs do not scorn each other or consider each other as a heretic on the basis of the strength of evidence. Just as the issue of saying "*InShaAllah I am Mu'min*" is mentioned in books of doctrine.[664] Therefore, it is necessary to save this third person from being considered a heretic or a misguided person. However, it is better to explain this to him in a nice manner. However, *Power over falsehood, with the impossibility of occurrence,*[665] is an agreed-upon statement; and no one has differed upon this issue.[666]

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَآتَيْنَا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ هُدَىٰهَا وَلَٰكِنْ حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ مِنِّي لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ۞

And if We so Wished, We would have given every soul its guidance; but it has been said in my Truthful promise,[667] I shall fill Hell with men and jinn, all of them.[668]

And Allāh táālā knows best.

Written by the lowly Rashīd Aĥmad Gangohī, may he be forgiven.

SEAL

[662] Animal is the main class and human is a sub-category and one among kinds of animals.

[663] *lihāzā wuqūú e kizb ke mánā durust ho gaye.*

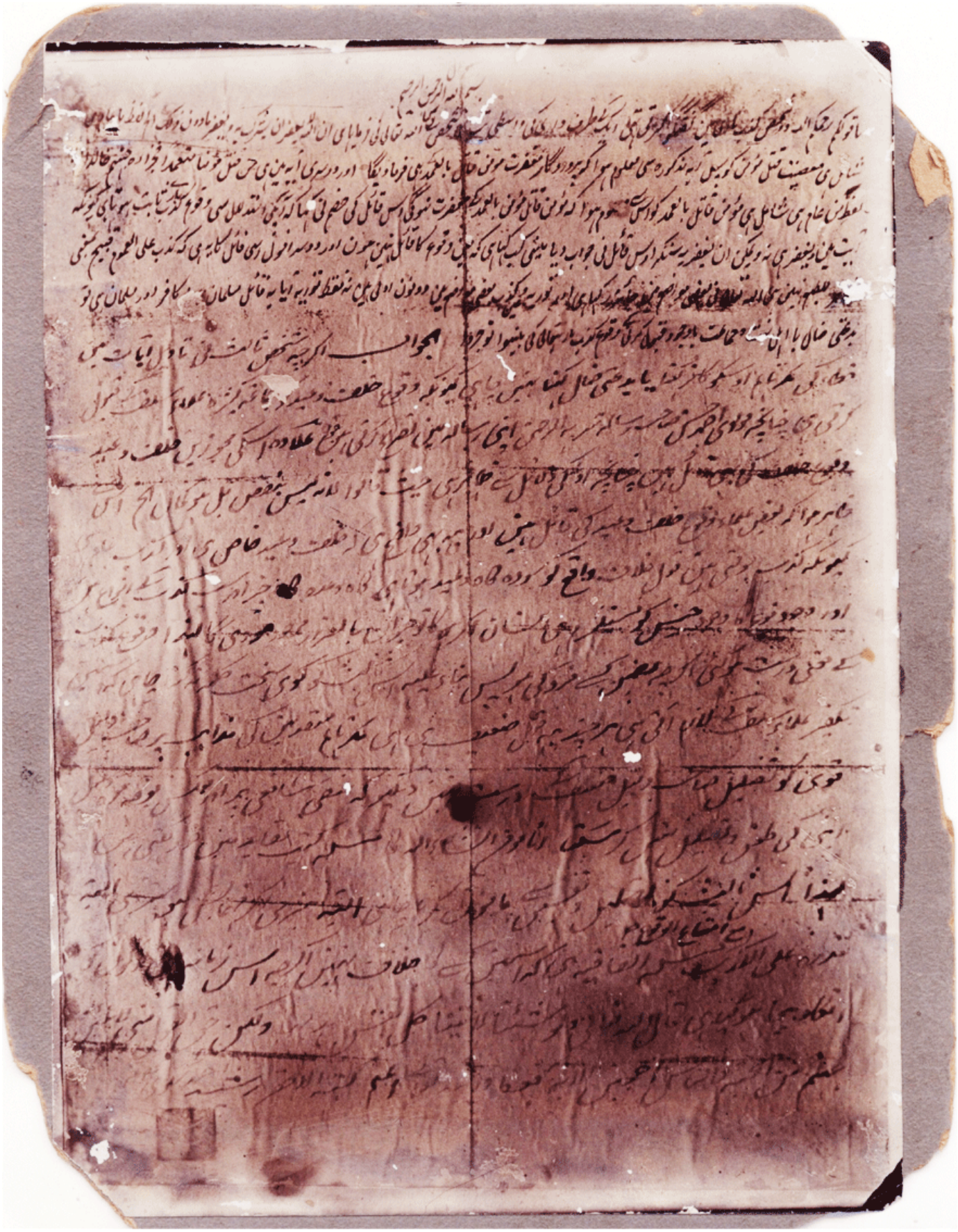
[664] Upon which there is a difference between Shāfiýīs and Ĥanafīs; yet they do not consider each other heretics.

[665] *qudrah álā al-kadhib maá imtināá al-wuqūú.*

[666] Which is another delusion and a false claim. No Sunni scholar has attested this belief; see *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ* and a simplified summary in English titled: *The Truth About a Lie*.

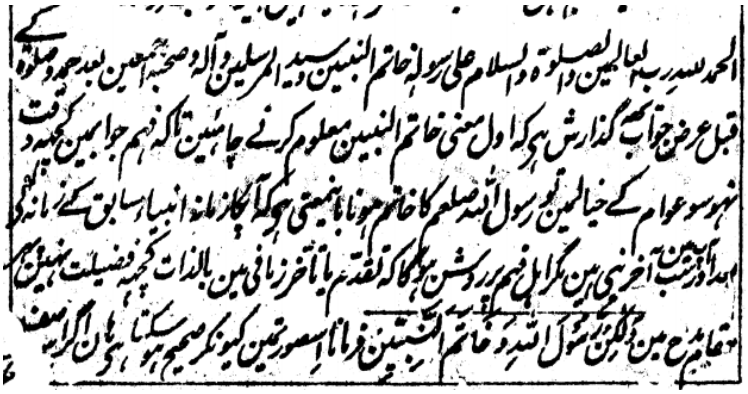
[667] In *Tafsīr Qurţubi*: "My truthful promise that I shall punish those who disobey me'.

[668] Sūrah Sajdah, 32:13.

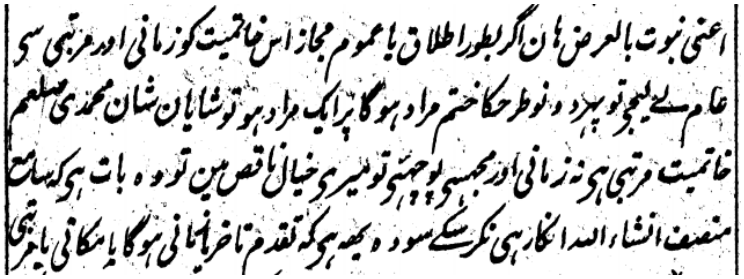


This is a photograph of Rashīd Gangohi's fatwā which is preserved to this day

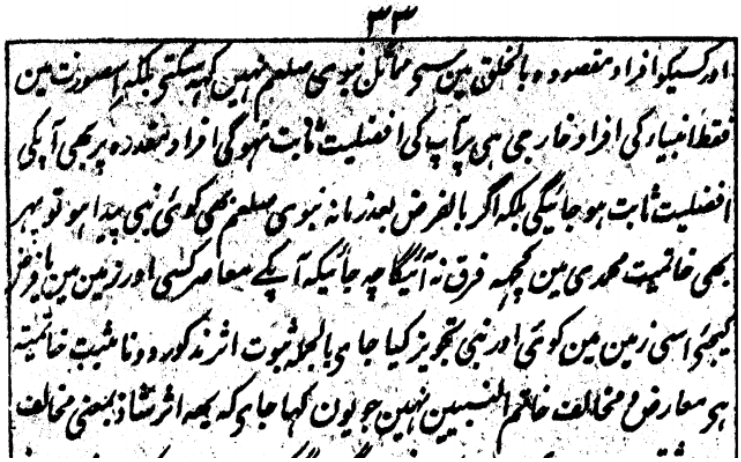
These are three passages in the book[669] printed in the lifetime of the author in 1291 AH and is probably the original print edition. Alahazrat in his refutation mentioned offensive passages one after the other; Deobandis accuse Alahazrat of creating a novel meaning of kufr by stringing together three different sentences. The truth of the matter is that these sentences are kufr even when considered individually. We ask the Deobandis how would they explain these statements if presented by a Qādiyānī as proof for Mirzā's claim of prophethood particularly the last one.



...firstly, one should learn about the meaning of [the phrase] *Seal of Prophets* so that it may not pose difficulty in comprehending the answer. Common folk [or laymen] think that RasūlAllāh ﷺ being 'Seal' means that the age [of his advent] comes later than all other prophets and he is chronologically the last prophet; but people of understanding are aware that there is no superiority in chronologically being prior or later; then, how can this be valid as praise in this context: "***Rather, he is the Messenger of Allāh and the Seal of Prophets***"?[670]



...yes, if one considers absolute, or generally figurative [meaning], this 'finality' will be both chronological and by rank in general. And if the intention is one of the two, then that which befits Muĥammad ﷺ is the finality of rank, not chronological finality. If you ask me, in my humble opinion, a judicious person cannot reject this.



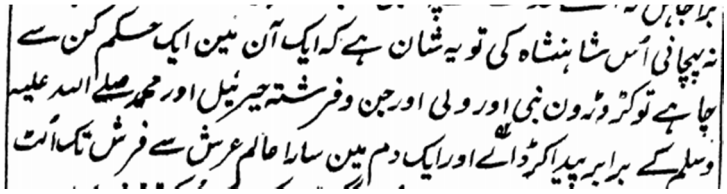
Hypothetically, suppose a new prophet is born after the time of the Prophet ﷺ, even then there will be no effect on the 'finality' of the prophethood of Muĥammad ﷺ; [comparitively] if there is [a prophet] among his contemporaries or in another earth; or if it is supposed even on this very earth, another prophet [after his ﷺ time without affecting his finality].

[669] Pages 2, 9 and 33.

[670] Sūrah Aĥzāb, 33:40

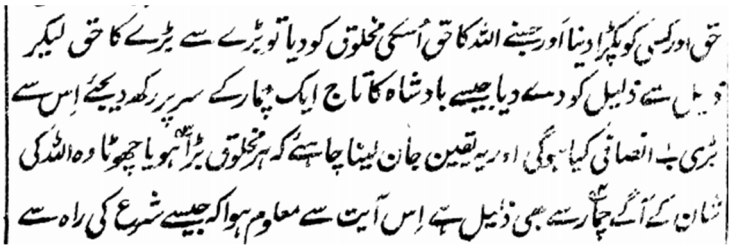
These exhibits are from the book printed by Iftikhār Publishers, Delhi in 1893 AH

Page 31



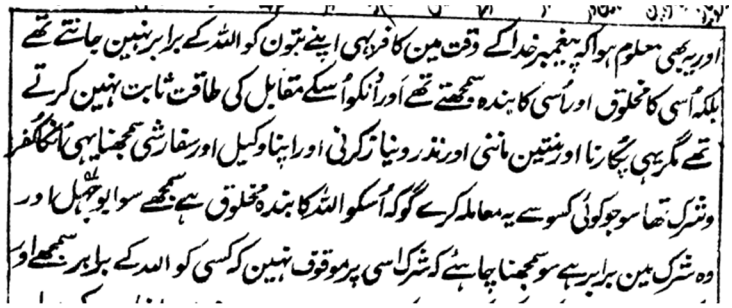
The greatness of the King of kings is such that in one instant and by one command 'Be,' if He so wishes, He can create billions of prophets and saints and jinns and angels equal to Jibrīl and Muĥammad ﷺ.

Page 14



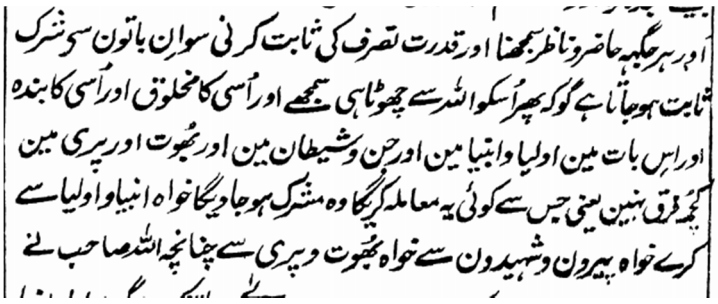
...it should be known with certainty, that everyone in the creation – whether great or small; all of them are more contemptible [*dhalīl*] than a menial cobbler in the Presence of Allāh.

Page 8



Even kāfirs in the time of Messenger of Allāh did not believe that their idols were equal to Allāh; they too believed that [idols were] creation and slaves; nor did they profess that [such idols] had power against Allāh. Rather, they would call upon them and make vows and were beholden to them, they would deem [such idols] as their advocates and intercessors – this was their disbelief and polytheism. **Thus, if anyone does a similar thing, even if they believe they [intercessors] are the slaves and creation of Allāh – then he and Abū Jahl are equal in polytheism.**

Page 8



..to believe that [such an intercessor] can be 'present and watching' [*ĥāđir-nāżir*] and prove that he has the power to dispense in affairs [*ţaşarruf*]; these things are proof of polytheism. Further, even if he believes that such a person [intercessor] is lesser than Allāh and His creation and His slave; in this issue there is no difference among saints and prophets, or jinn and Devils, or ghosts and fairies. That is, whoever deals with any of them such becomes a polytheist – whether he does it with prophets, saints, shaykhs, martyrs or ghosts and fairies.

Page 11

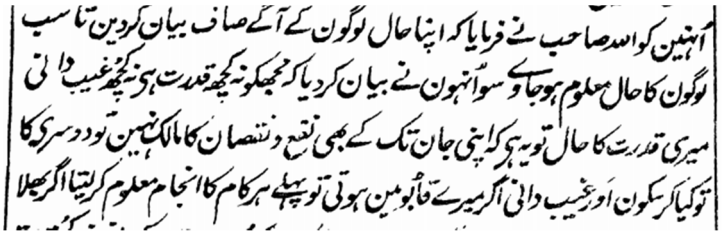
..to respect the woods around the city – that is to abstain from hunting in woods or cutting its trees or pull out the grass or graze the cattle – all these things are ordained by Allāh for His own worship

...

...

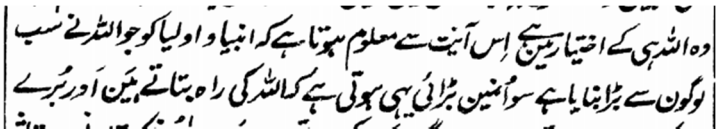
then to go to such places from far away with the intention to visit them; or to illuminate such places or adorn or drape them or erect a pole in their name, or walk backwards from such a place; to kiss their grave or fan with peacock feathers or affix a canopy over it or kiss the threshold or stand there with hands folded or entreat them for favour or take residence in the vicinity [*mujāwar*] or respect the forest surrounding the places [of any prophet or ghost or fairy] or does similar things, then such person has committed polytheism and it is known as polytheism in worship [*ishrāk fi'l íbādat*]

Page 24



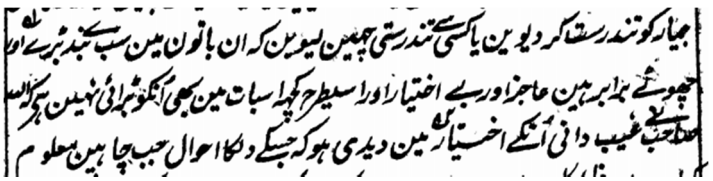
Allāh táālā ordered him to describe his state in front of all people clearly so that the state of everyone else is known; so, he said: "I have no power, nor any knowledge of unseen. The state of my power is such that I do not have any power to benefit or harm my own self, then how can I do anything for anybody else?"

Page 24



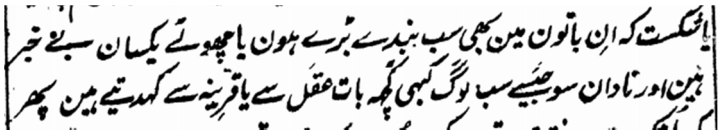
...it can be understood from this verse, that prophets and saints whom Allāh táālā has made high [*ba□ā*]

Page 25



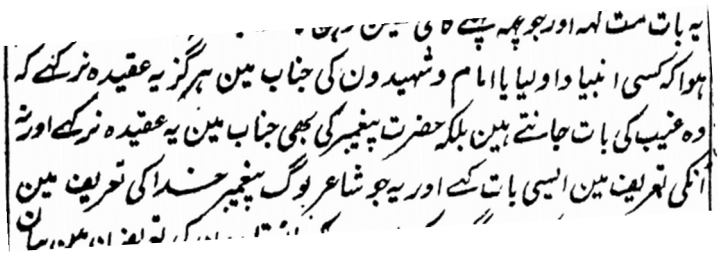
...all slaves, great and ordinary [big and small] are equal; weak and helpless without any authority

Page 25



...in these things as well, all slaves – esteemed and common [*baḏā/chhoṯā*] – are all equal, unaware and ignorant

Page 26



We learn from this ĥadīth that concerning any prophet or saint or imām or martyr, one should not have the belief that they knew unseen – rather, even about the Prophet himself nor mention this in his description.

Page 27

Whoever says that the Prophet of Allāh or any Imām or any Elder knew things from the unseen, but they would not utter it respecting the Sharīáh, such a person is very big liar; rather, nobody knows about the unseen except Allāh.

Bukhārī narrates from Umm Álā'a that she said: RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "By Allāh, I do not know; By Allāh, I do not know and I am the Messenger of Allāh – what will be done to me, nor to you"

Translation:[671] In *Mishkāt*, in the Chapter of Fear and Weeping, it is mentioned that Bukhārī mentions Umm Alā'a that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: I swear by Allāh I do not know; again, I swear by Allāh that I do not know – even though I am the Messenger of Allāh; what will happen[672] to me or to you.

Insight:[673] That is whatever Allāh táālā will do to his slaves – whether in this world or in the grave or in the hereafter – thus, nobody knows its reality: no prophet, no saint; neither do they know their own state, nor that of others...

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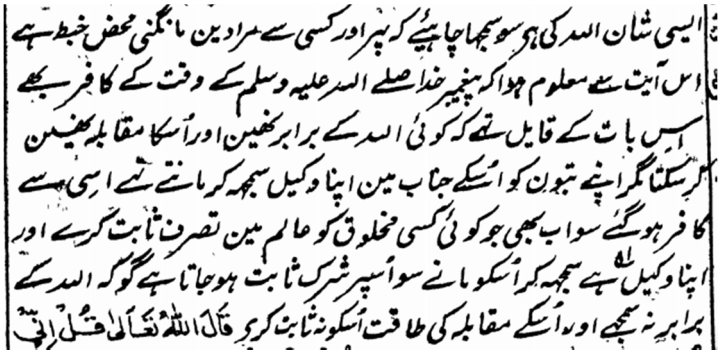
[671] This is Ismāýīl's translation in Urdu; the previous paragraph was translated from the quoted Arabic.

[672] Literal translation from Ismāýīl's Urdu: "How will I be treated nor how you will [be treated]".

[673] The letter ***fā*** is for *fāyidah* meaning: the lesson we learn from the ĥadīth just quoted.

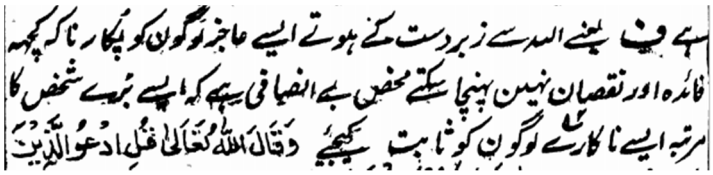
Page 28

If anyone believes that anybody in the creation has the authority to dispense in affairs [*taṣarruf*] and believes that such [entity] is his supporter [*wakīl*] and believes in it, then he has committed polytheism – even if he does not deem such [a person] as equal to Allāh, or has any power against Him.



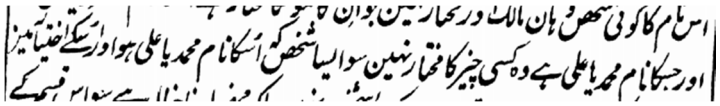
Page 29

That is, when such a Powerful like Allāh exists, calling upon weak people who can neither benefit nor harm is absolutely unjust because this proves such a great rank of such a great person for such worthless people.[674]



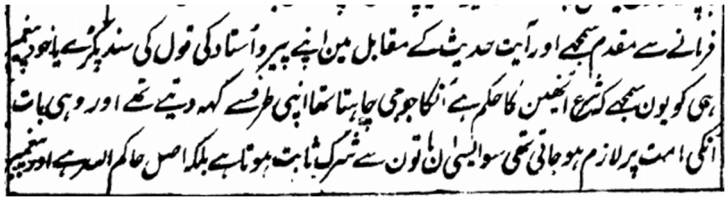
Page 42

One whose name is Muĥammad or Álī, has no choice to do anything



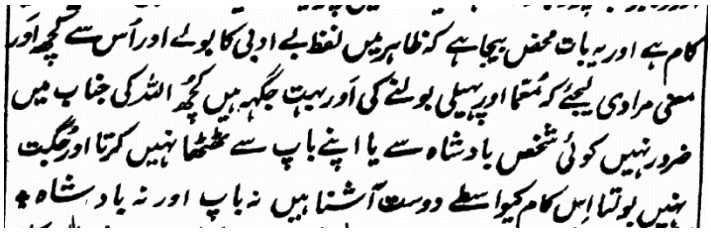
Page 42

Or if one believes about the Prophet that *sharīáh* is by his command – and he made lawful whatever he wished and it would become binding upon his followers. All such things necessitate polytheism; rather, the Sovereign is Allāh and the Prophet is only an informer.



Page 56

It is a futile [claim] to utter a disrespectful thing expressly [*żāhir*] and then say that it means something else. There are other occasions for conundrums and riddles; nobody talks in puns and equivoques with one's own father or the king; such things are said to friends and buddies – not one's own fathers and kings.



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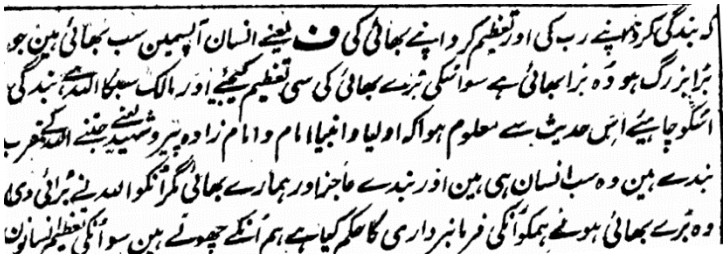
[674] Ismāýīl the cobbler, whom Deobandis consider their guru and high-priest, calls prophets and saints as worthless. Is this not blasphemy? Will Keller's heart tremble at this – how will these *ashqiyā'a* come to the Pond of RasulAllah ﷺ? This is why Alahazrat said:

zikr rokey fazl kātey naqṣ kā jūyān rahey
phir kahey mardak ke hun ummat RasūlAllāh ki?
He prevents his ﷺ mention, diminishes his rank and intently tries to find a flaw,
And still the scoundrel claims that he is a follower of RasūlAllāh ﷺ

Page 60

He translates a ĥadīth which ends thus (in his Urdu translation)

"...worship your Lord and respect your brother."



Insight:[675] That is all humans are brothers; those who are elder, are our elder brothers – and one should respect them like you would respect your elder brother. And everyone's Lord is Allāh, so worship Him. Thus we understand from this ĥadīth that saints and prophets, imāms and their children, shaykhs and martyrs – all the nearest slaves of Allāh are all humans and slaves and weak and our brothers; except that Allāh has given them eminence, so they are our elder brothers; and He commanded us to obey them, so we are their younger brothers.

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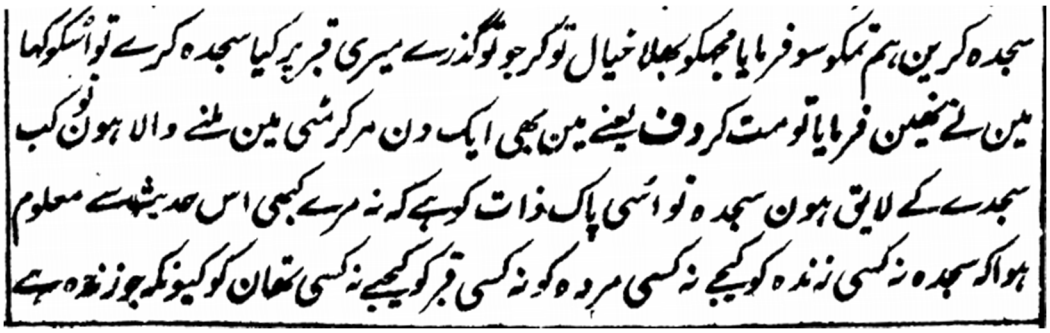
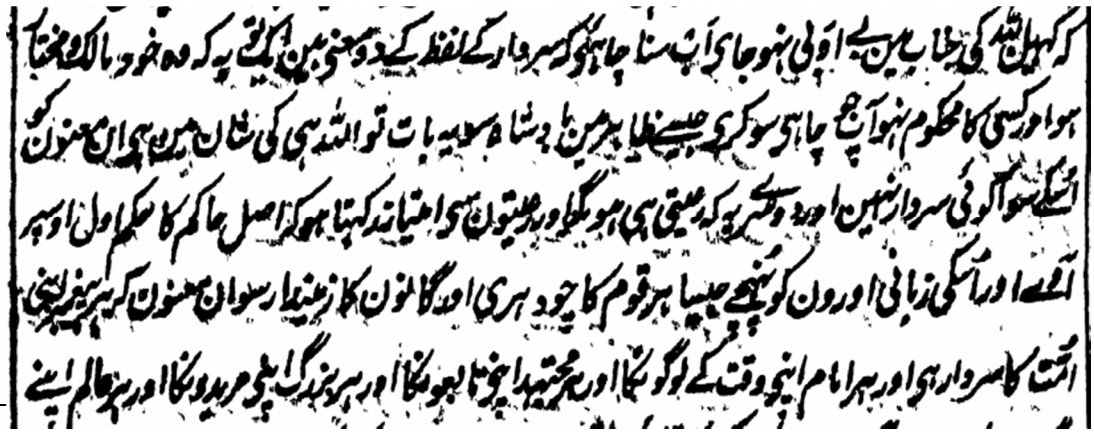
This is the worst passage of all in which he mentions the ĥadīth of Qays ﷺ in which RasūlAllāh ﷺ asked him, "Would you prostrate to my grave?" but Ismāýīl added his own insight and said that he would die and rot in his grave. "*mar kar mitti hona*" is an idiom in Urdu meaning "died and became dust." Deobandis suddenly become avid literalists here and say, what he meant was, that my body would touch the dust – but they give all kinds of far-fetched explanations for other statements in the book.

Insight: That is, I shall also die one day and became dust, then how am I worthy of prostration.



Page 63

Just like a village chief [*choudhary*] and the landlord [*zamīndār*] in a village; thus it is in a similar meaning that a prophet is 'leader' of his nation [ummat]

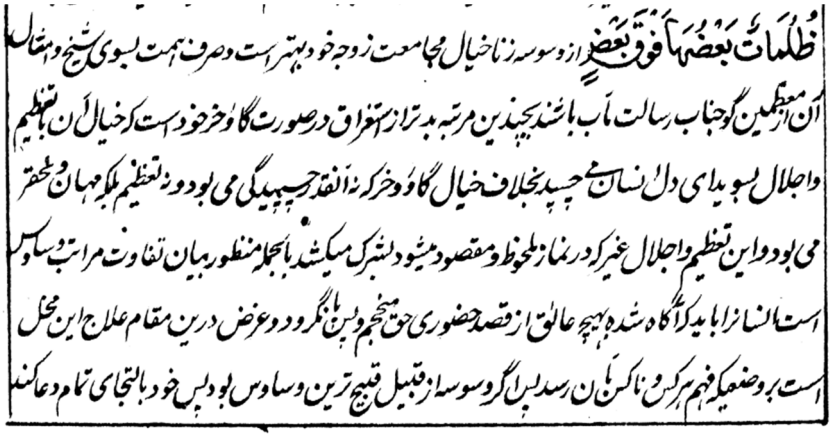


[675] *fa* for *fāyidah.*

Ṣirāṭ e Mustaqīm

This exhibit is from the book printed by Zia Publishers, Meerut in 1285 AH. This book, originally in Persian, was written by Ismāýīl Dihlawī and claimed to be the utterings and teachings of his shaykh Sayyid Aĥmad Baraylawī. Apologists for Ismāýīl claim that the following passage is not Ismāýīl's own but that of his shaykh; even though, Ismāýīl has himself claimed full responsibility for the contents of the book:[676]

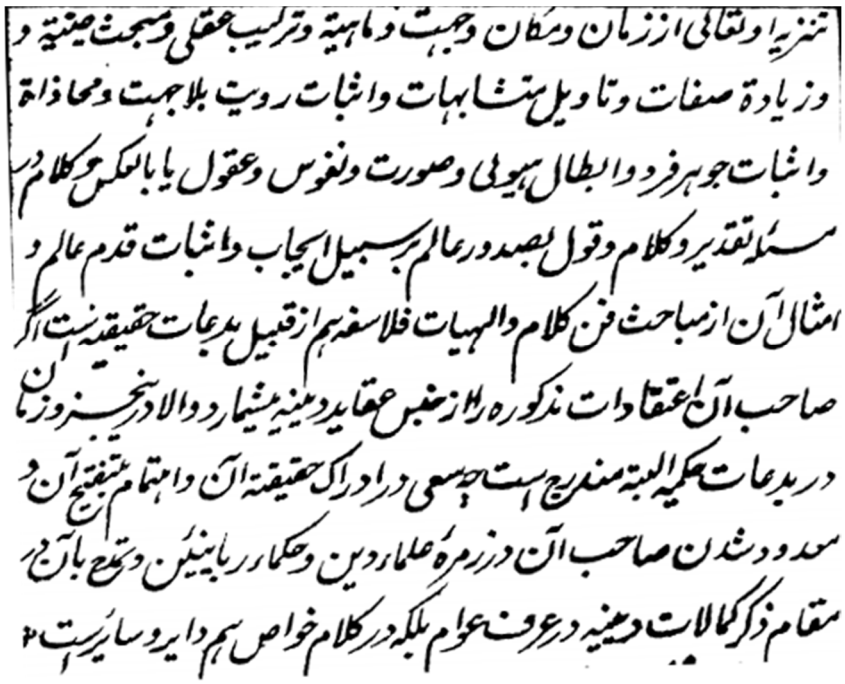
It is better to think about sexual intercourse with one's own wife, than tempting thoughts of fornication; and to expend one's thoughts towards one's shaykh or similar revered individuals – even if it is the esteemed Messenger,[677] is worse many times over than being engrossed in thinking about one's own cow or donkey...



Yīđāĥ al-Ĥaqq

This is page 24 of the original Persian work published by Afđal al-Maṭābiý Press in 1800s with *Yak Rozi* on its margins.

...that is transcendence of [Allāh] the Exalted from time, place, direction, modality, rational composition; and discussion of Attributes being the same [as Essence] or additional; or to prove that Allāh táālā can be seen without direction or boundaries; or the existence of individual-indivisible particle [*jawhar al-fard*] or the non-existence of prime-matter or hyle [*hayūlā*] and forms and nature and thought or vice-versa; or debate about destiny; or discuss that it was necessary for the world to exist, or prove that the universe exists from eternity or such things from discussions of rational theology [*kalām*] or philosophical theology are all inherently heretical beliefs if anybody professes the aforementioned beliefs and considers them as part of religious beliefs

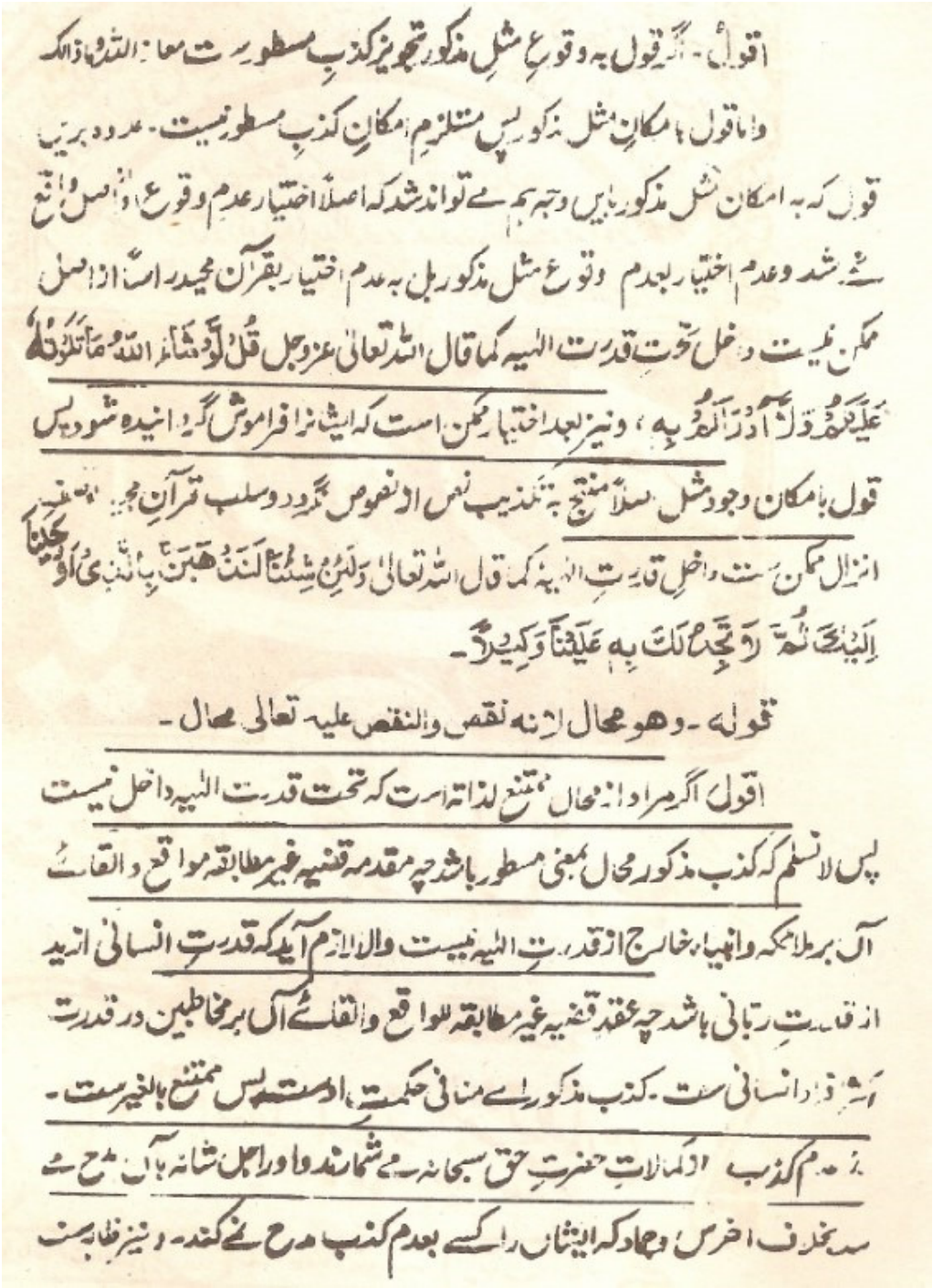


[676] *Ṣirāṭ e Mustaqīm*, p95.

[677] The original does not have the ritual blessing upon the Prophet ﷺ; also *janāb risālat ma'āb* clearly refers to Allāh's Messenger ﷺ.

Yak Rozah

This exhibit is from *Yak Rozah/Yak Rozī* of Ismāýīl Dihlawī. I have another older edition, probably from the mid-1800s, printed on the margins of *Yīđāĥ al-Ĥaqq*, but this is preferred for readability [*Note: Only relevant portions are translated here*].

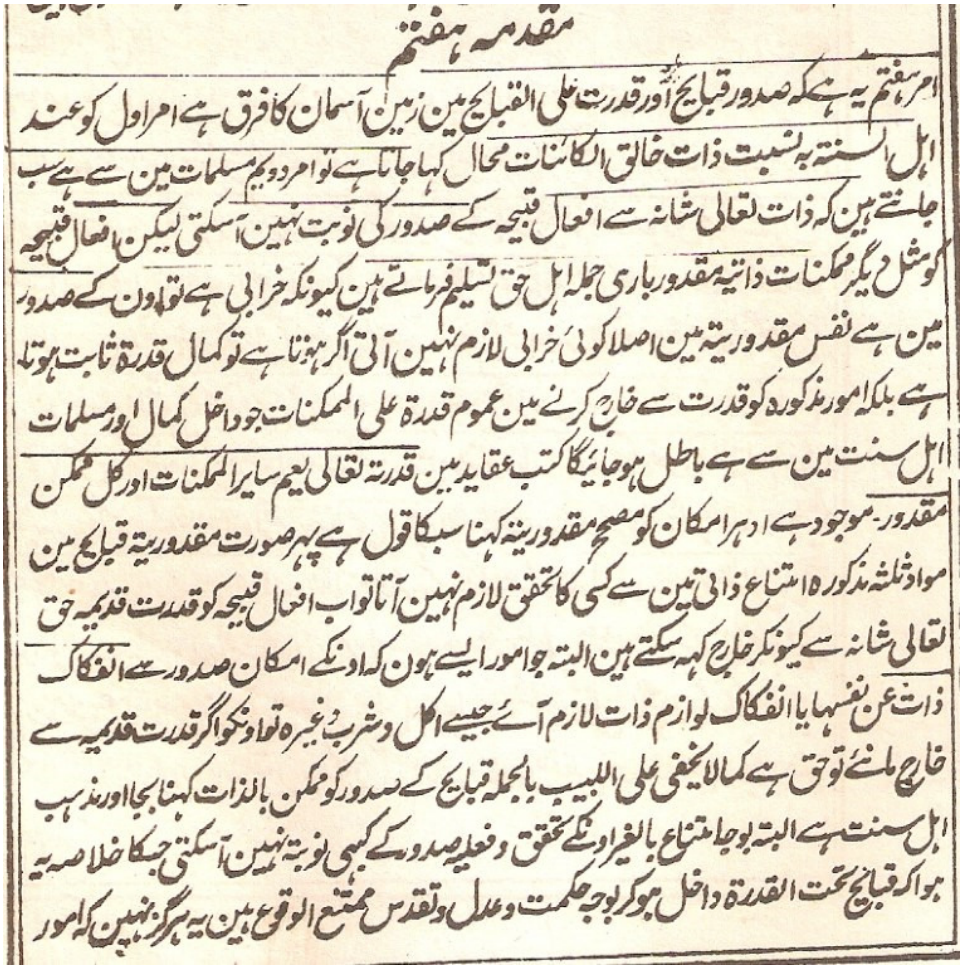


After giving information, it is possible that Allāh táālā can discard it. Therefore, the saying that 'Creation similar to him can exist' does not fundamentally belie any text; and the negation of the Qur'ān [*salb e Qur'ān*] after revelation is also a possibility.

We do not accept that such a falsehood is impossible [*muĥāl*] for Allāh táālā. Because, to make any matter or information contrary to what has occurred, and to inform angels and prophets about it, is not removed from the Divine Power of Allāh táālā; otherwise, it would necessitate that the power of humans is more than the Power of the Almighty.

They enumerate the absence of falsehood [*ádam e kazib*] as an Attribute of Perfection [for Allāh taala] and such an absence of falsehood is considered as praise of Allāh táālā in comparison to the dumb folk or inanimate objects. The Attribute of Perfection is when a person has the power to utter falsehood but owing to reasons and wisdom, he abstains from uttering a false thing – such a person deserves praise. Compare this to a person whose tongue is useless [i.e., dumb] and who wishes to utter false speech, but he has no voice; or if someone holds his mouth shut [such that he cannot utter anything] – sensible people do not deem such a person as praiseworthy. Rather, the praiseworthy thing is to [voluntarily] avoid the flaw of falsehood and not taint oneself by uttering falsehood.

The seventh proem: is that occurrence of despicable things and to have power to do despicable things – are as separate as the sky and the earth. The former is said to be impossible near Ahl al-Sunnah; but the latter is deemed an accepted belief and everybody knows that for the Person of Allāh, Exalted is He, such a situation will not arise that any despicable act will have to occur; however, despicable acts [*afáāl qabīĥah*] are included in Divine Power, similar to other inherently possible things [*mumkināt dhātiyyah*] according to all the righteous folk [*jumlah ahl e ĥaqq*] because if there is anything bad, it is in the occurrence of such despicable things – there is nothing wrong in having power to commit such acts.



مقدمہ ہفتم

امر ہفتم یہ ہے کہ صدور قبایح اور قدرت علی القبایح مین زمین آسمان کا فرق ہے امر اول کو عند اہل السنۃ بہ نسبت ذات خالق الکائنات محال کہا جاتا ہے تو امر دویم مسلمات مین سے ہے سب جانتے ہین کہ ذات تعالی شانہ سے افعال قبیحہ کے صدور کی نوبت نہین آسکتی لیکن افعال قبیحہ کو مثل دیگر ممکنات ذاتیہ مقدور باری جملہ اہل حق تسلیم فرماتے ہین کیونکہ خرابی ہے تو اون کے صدور مین ہے نفس مقدوریۃ مین اصلا کوئی خرابی لازم نہین آتی اگر ہوتا ہے تو کمال قدرۃ ثابت ہوتا ہے بلکہ امور مذکورہ کو قدرت سے خارج کرنے مین عموم قدرۃ علی الممکنات جو داخل کمال اور مسلمات اہل سنت مین سے ہے باطل ہوجائیگا کتب عقاید مین قدرۃ تعالی یعم سایر الممکنات اور کل ممکن مقدور۔ موجود ہے ادہر امکان کو مصحح مقدوریۃ کہنا سبکا قول ہے پہر صورت مقدوریۃ قبایح مین مواد ثلثہ مذکورہ امتناع ذاتی تین سے کسی کا تحقق لازم نہین آتا تو اب افعال قبیحہ کو قدرت قدیمہ حق تعالی شانہ سے کیونکر خارج کہہ سکتے ہین البتہ جو امور ایسے ہون کہ اونکے امکان صدور سے انفکاک ذات عن نفسہا یا انفکاک لوازم ذات لازم آئے جیسے اکل و شرب وغیرہ تو اونکو اگر قدرت قدیمہ سے خارج مانئے تو حق ہے کما لایخفی علی اللبیب بالجملہ قبایح کے صدور کو ممکن بالذات کہنا بجا اور مذہب اہل سنت ہے البتہ بوجہ امتناع بالغیر اونکے تحقق و فعلیہ صدور کے کبھی نوبت نہین آسکتی جسکا خلاصہ یہ ہوا کہ قبایح تحت القدرۃ داخل ہوکر بوجہ حکمت و عدل و تقدس ممتنع الوقوع ہین یہ ہرگز نہین کہ امور

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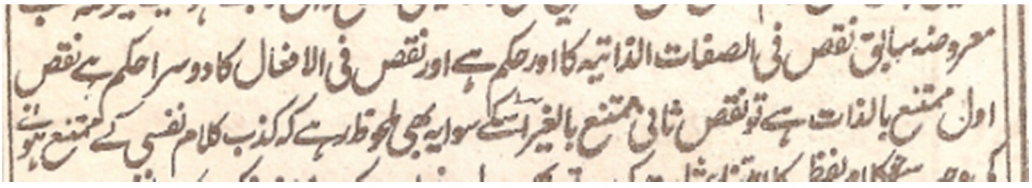
There is a difference in ruling concerning flaw [*naqṣ*] in Personal Attributes [*ṣifāt dhātiyyah*] and flaw in Actions [*afáāl*]; the former kind of a flaw is inherently impossible [*mumtaniý bi'dh dhāt*] and the latter is contingently impossible [*mumtaniý bi'l ghayr*]



معروضہ سابق نقص فی الصفات الذاتیہ کا اور حکم ہے اور نقص فی الافعال کا دوسرا حکم ہے نقص اول ممتنع بالذات ہے تو نقص ثانی ممتنع بالغیر اسکے سوا یہ بھی ملحوظ رہے کہ کذب کلام نفسی کے ممتنع ہونے

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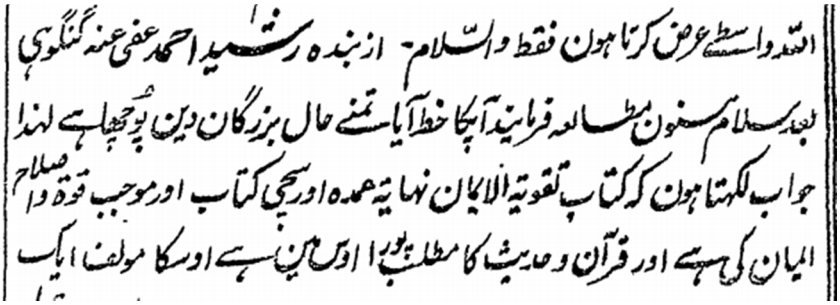
These exhibits are from the first volume printed in Moradabad in 1323 AH:

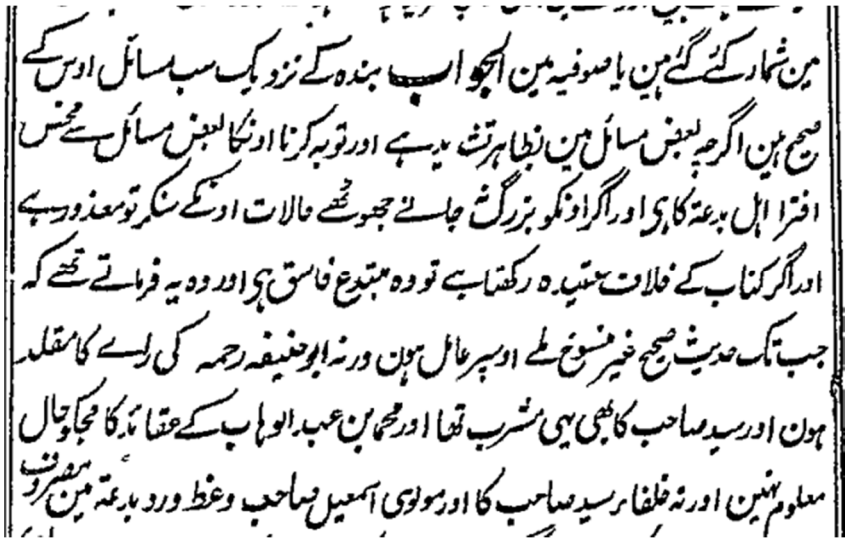
Page 45:

The book *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān* is an extremely excellent and truthful book; it causes strengthening and amendment of faith and the meaning of Qur'ān and ĥadīth is entirely found in this book



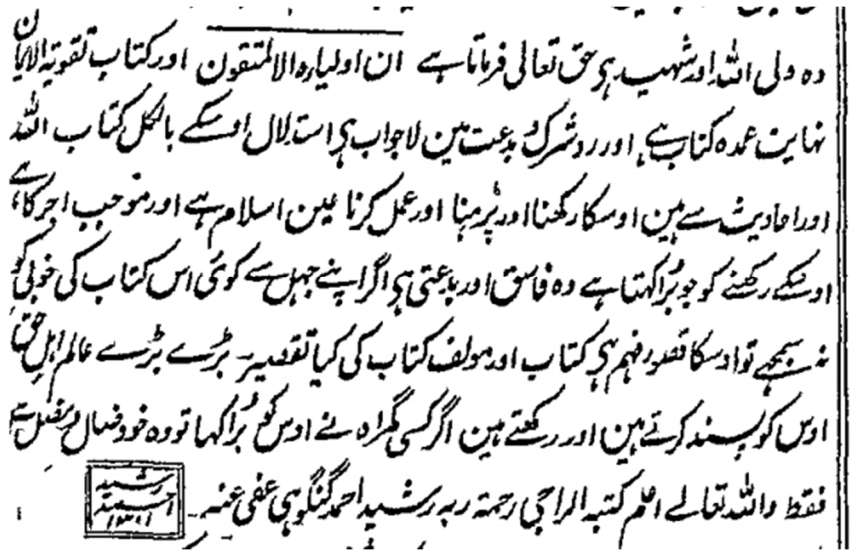
Page 65:

In my opinion, all the issues and matters [*masāyil*] discussed in the book are valid and correct, even though externally, there is harshness in some issues. That he repented from some of those issues is the slander [or false accusation] of heretics. If a person does not respect him [Ismāýīl] as an elder because of false stories that he has heard, he shall be excused; but if he holds a belief contrary to the book, he is a heretic and fāsiq.



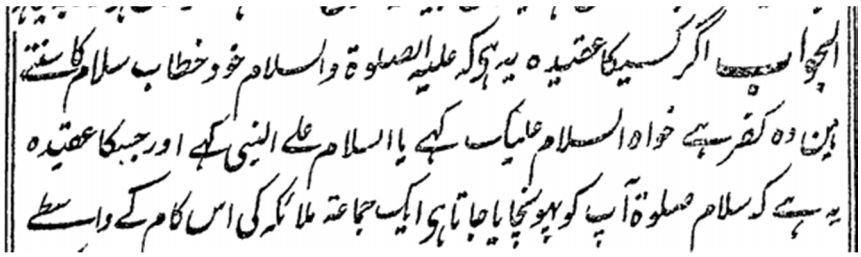
Page 122:

Taqwiyatu'l Īmān is an extremely excellent book; and has irrefutable proofs against polytheism and innovation [*shirk-bidáh*] and is completely in accordance with the Book of Allāh and the ĥadīth. To keep it with oneself, to read it and to act upon [its exhortations] is in essence faith itself [*áyn islām*] and anyone who speaks ill about keeping this book is a fāsiq and a heretic. If someone, due to ignorance does not understand the beauty of this book, it should be deemed a failure of his understanding, not the error of the author. Prominent scholars and righteous people have liked this book; if a misguided person speaks ill of this book, he is himself a misguiding heretic.



Page 99

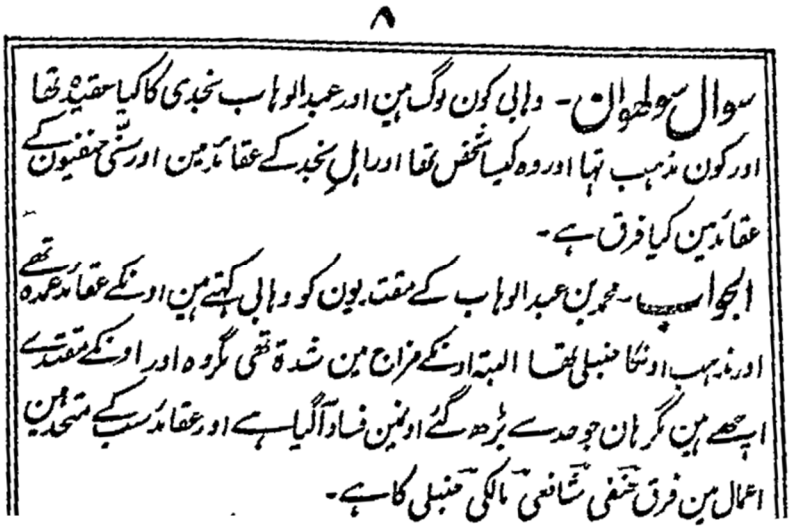
If someone believes that the Prophet ﷺ hears the salutation himself, then it is kufr – regardless of [the tense] whether he says: "Peace upon you" or "Peace upon the Prophet" [*as-salāmu alayka* or *as-salamu ála'n nabiyy*]



الجواب اگر کسیکا عقیدہ یہ ہو کہ علیہ الصلوۃ والسلام خود خطاب سلام کا سنتے ہین وہ کفر ہے خواہ السلام علیک کہے یا السلام علی النبی کہے اور جسکا عقیدہ یہ ہے کہ سلام صلوۃ آپ کو پہونچایا جاتا ہی ایک جماعۃ ملائکہ کی اس کام کے واسطے

Page 8

Question: Who are Wahābīs? What were the beliefs of Ábd al-Wahhāb Najdi, and what was his madh'hab? What kind of a man was he? What are the differences between the beliefs of Najdi folk and Sunni-Ĥanafī folk?



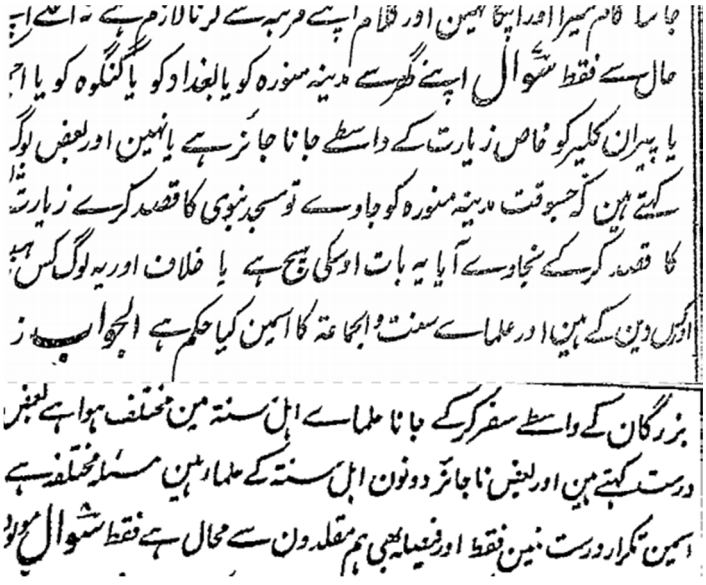
سوال سولھوان - وہابی کون لوگ ہین اور عبدالوہاب نجدی کا کیا عقیدہ تھا اور کون مذہب تہا اور وہ کیسا شخص تھا اور اہل نجد کے عقائد مین اور سنی حنفیون کے عقائد مین کیا فرق ہے -

Answer: The followers of Muĥammad ibn Ábd al-Wahhāb are known as Wahābīs. Their beliefs were excellent and their madh'hab was Ĥanbalī. Although, his manner was harsh, but he and his followers are good people – except those who exceeded boundaries and who have become corrupted. The beliefs [*áqāýid*] of all are the same – in actions, the differences are like that of Ĥanafī, Shāfiýī, Mālikī and Ĥanbalī.

الجواب - محمد بن عبدالوہاب کے معتقدون کو وہابی کہتے ہین اونکے عقائد عمدہ تھے اور مذہب اونکا حنبلی تھا البتہ اونکے مزاج مین شدۃ تھی مگر وہ اور اونکے معتقد اچھے ہین مگر ان جو حد سے بڑھ گئے اونمین فساد آگیا ہے اور عقائد سب کے متحد ہین اعمال مین فرق حنفی شافعی مالکی حنبلی کا ہے -

Page 49-50

Question: If one sets off from his home [journeying] to Madīnah Munawwarah or Baghdad or Gangoh or Ajmer or the Shaykhs of Kaliyar – specifically to visit them: is it permissible or not? Some people say that when one goes to Madīnah Munawwarah, his intention should be to visit the Masjid – and should not go with the intention of visiting [RasulAllah ﷺ]. How far is this statement of his true; these people belong to which group or which faith – what do scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah say in this matter?



سوال اپنے گھر سے مدینہ منورہ کو یا بغداد کو یا گنگوہ کو یا اجمیر یا پیران کلیر کو خاص زیارت کے واسطے جانا جائز ہے یا نہین اور بعض لوگ کہتے ہین کہ جسوقت مدینہ منورہ کو جاوے تو مسجد نبوی کا قصد کرے زیارت کا قصد کرکے نجاوے آیا یہ بات اوسکی صحیح ہے یا خلاف اور یہ لوگ کس مذہب اور کس دین کے ہین اور علماے سنت والجماعۃ کا اسمین کیا حکم ہے الجواب ز

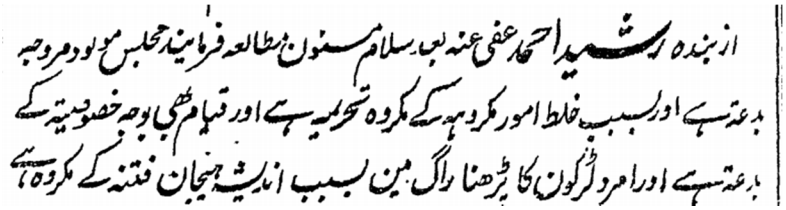
Answer: There is a difference of opinion among scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah on undertaking a journey to visit elders.[678] Some have said that it is permissible and some others have said that it is impermissible – both groups are scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah. It is not proper to argue on this matter; also, it is impossible for followers [muqallids] like us to make a decision.

بزرگان کے واسطے سفر کرکے جانا علماے اہل سنۃ مین مختلف ہوا ہے بعض درست کہتے ہین اور بعض ناجائز دونون اہل سنۃ کے علما ہین مسئلہ مختلفہ ہے اسمین تکرار درست نہین فقط اور فیصلہ بھی ہم مقلدون سے محال ہے فقط سوال موقو

[678] The idiom refers to Elders as in 'saints and prophets' which is obvious in the question.

Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah, On Impermissibility of Mawlid.

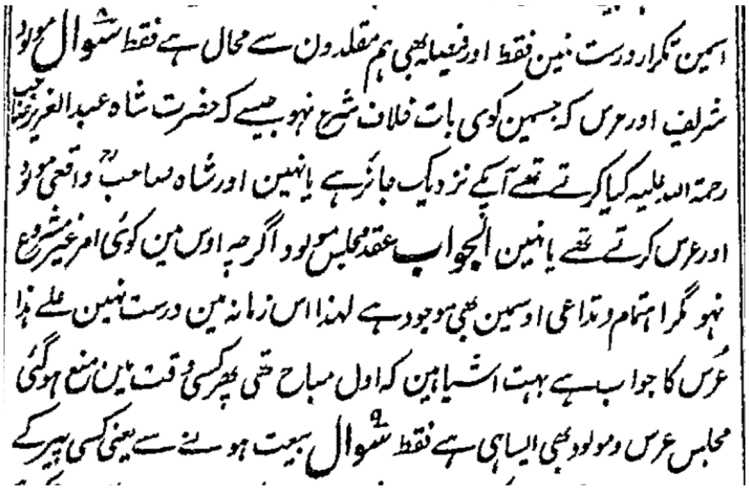
Page 41:



[Written] by the humble servant Rashīd Aĥmad – may Allāh forgive him – after salām, I say: [Celebration of] Mawlid as it is in vogue is a bidáh; and because of accompanying dislikeable actions, it is prohibitively dislikeable; and standing up [*qiyām*] is also bidáh due to its being specified ; and it is disliked to listen to the singing of young boys as it can lead to temptation

Page 50

Rashīd Aĥmad is evasive in the below answer, because the questioner mentions Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz Dihlawī celebrated both Mawlid and attended *úrs*;[679] let Deobandis prove Mawlid and *úrs* conducted in the age of Rashīd Aĥmad were different from that of Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz. As for the reprehensible things done by fāsiq people, such as intermixing of sexes or singing, dancing and music – no Sunni scholar has permitted it; Abu'l Ĥasan Nadwī has himself mentioned that Alahazrat condemned it.



Question: The blessed Mawlid and úrs which does not have any action contrary to the sharīáh; such as those held by the master, Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz may Allāh have mercy on him; do you deem it permissible or not? Did Shāh sahib really celebrate Mawlid or hold the *úrs*?

Answer: To arrange for a gathering to celebrate Mawlid – even if it is done without any action contrary to the sharīáh, but it is done as a function and by inviting people [*ihtimām*, *tadāýī*] therefore, it is not right to do it in this age; the answer for *úrs* is also the same. Many things were permissible [*mubāĥ*] in the past, but became impermissible in a later age. The gathering for *úrs* and Mawlid are also like this.

How did Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz attend a gathering of Mawlid or *úrs* – without arrangements for people to gather or calling them to gather on a specific day and date? Is any function in Deoband done without arrangements or calling people to attend on a specific day and date? Such as the one in which Hindu swamis are invited to share their wisdom? Do 'religious' Deobandis have the courage to condemn it? Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz has said replying to an objection by Mawlawī Ábd al-Ĥakīm Punjābī:

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[679] *Úrs* is a gathering on the anniversary of the death of a saint, when Qur'ān is recited and *fātiĥah* is recited; Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz permitted it and he himself attended it. Notice how Rashīd Aĥmed prevaricates and instead of a straightforward answer he has given elsewhere where he has said: "no kind of *úrs* or Mawlid is permitted." Abu'l Ĥasan Nadwī in his biographical notice of Alahazrat scornfully said that 'he supported these festivals in India they call *úrs*' but did not deem it necessary to mention that even Ábd al-Ázīz Dihlawī attended such gatherings. In *Risālah Dhabīĥah*, Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz refuted a contemporary muftī's objections. It is also clear from Rashīd Aĥmed's evasiveness that Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz attended and permitted such gatherings.

This criticism is due to critic's ignorance about that which he criticises. Because, other than things which are ordained by the sharīáh [as obligatory], nobody considers anything else as obligatory. Yes, visiting graves of pious Muslims [*ṣāliĥīn*] and to derive blessings [*barakah*] by donating reward [of good deeds] and recite the Qur'ān and do duáā; thereafter distribute sweets or food is deemed a commendable act [*amr mustaĥsin*] and considered as good by the ijmāá of scholars. Appointing a day for the *úrs* [is only] because it is a remembrance of that day when the soul crosses from this World of Endeavour to the World of Reward [*dār al-ámal, dār al-thawāb*] otherwise, it can be done any day and will be a deed towards success and salvation.[680]

It is also clear that Rashīd Aĥmad's alibi for not permitting *úrs* is lame.

Page 72

The questioner asks about Mawlid and that it was celebrated by Shāh Waliyullāh and his father Shāh Ábd al-Raĥīm Dihlawī as mentioned in *Durr al-Thamīn*; that Imām Suyūṭī said that it was commendable [*mustaĥsin*] in *Ĥusn al-Maqṣid*. In this fatwā, Rashīd Aĥmad appears rather relenting but only superficially, because he has to squirm out of a tight situation – he cannot call Shāh Waliyullāh as an innovator, nor can he permit Mawlid. Obviously, Rashīd Aĥmad is not straddling, because Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz has mentioned that gathering is permissible and scholars have overwhelmingly said the basis of Mawlid is to commemorate the 'happiness upon the birth of the Messenger ﷺ'

It is permissible to donate reward any day and deserves reward – there no date or time appointed by the sharīáh; it is also permissible to do it on the same day of birth or the day of passing. Thus, if he does not consider it necessary to do it on a certain day, but does it as he would do on any other day; and by this act of donating reward, he does not cause any harm to common people, then there is no harm in it. Everybody considers such an act permissible. The action of Shāh Ábd al-Raĥīm Dihlawī was also like this, and nobody can bring this as proof for the bidáh of our age. Moreover, that kind of giving food was for donating reward as it only says [in the citation]: 'relation with the Prophet.' There is no mention of any word that says: "happiness of his birth" nor mention of gathering to remember his birth. Thus there is no proof in it to celebrate Mawlid. Also, in Suyūṭī's time, there were no innovations [*bidáh*] like our age. See *Barāhīn e Qāṭiáh* for a detailed analysis of Suyūṭī's *Maqṣid*. Allāh táālā knows best.

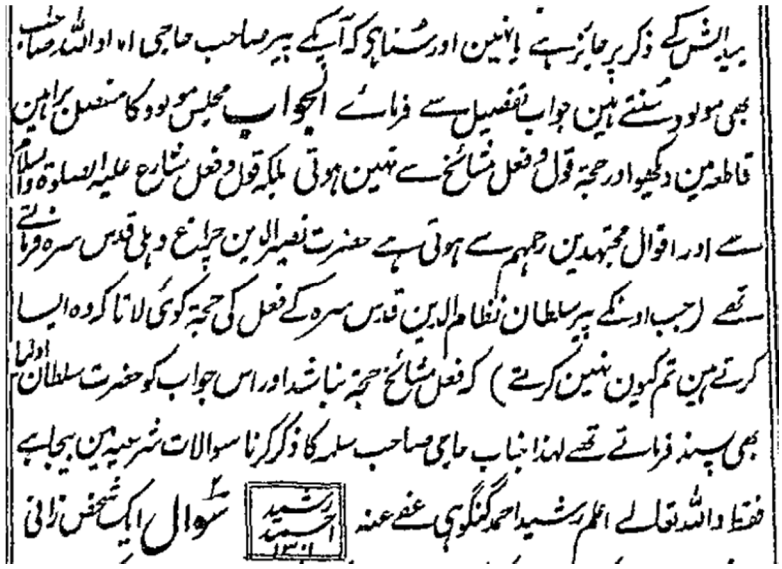
Page 90

The questioner asks whether Mawlid is permissible and that Ĥājī Imdādullāh also listens to Mawlid; but Rashīd is not impressed:

[680] *Zubdatu'n Naṣāyiĥ*, p42. See Appendix D for a scan of this page.

See *Barāhīn e Qāṭiáh* for a detailed analysis of Mawlid gatherings; the words or actions of elder scholars or sufi shaykhs [*mashāyikh*] cannot be considered a proof.

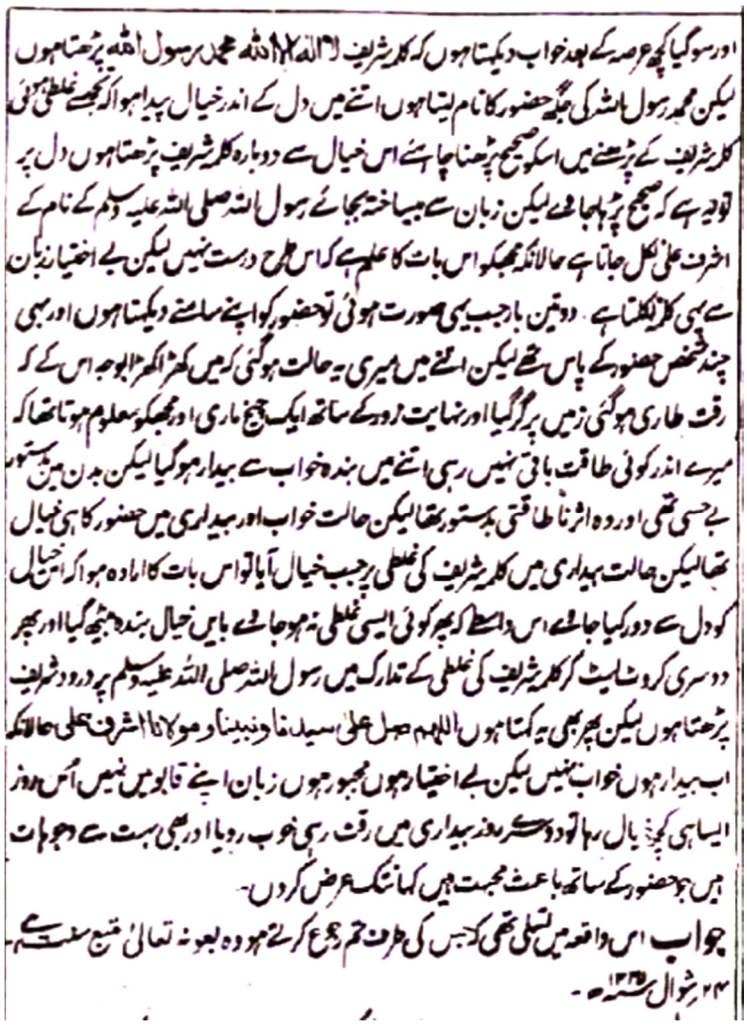
Rather only the words or actions of the Lawgiver عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَام or the opinions of Mujtahid imāms are considered proof [to make anything permissible]



***Al-Imdād* – Ṣafar 1336**

A disciple of Ashraf Álī writes to him about his utterance ***lā iláha illā Allāh, Ashraf Álī RasūlAllāh*** in a dream and thereafter in wakeful state, ***Allahumma ṣalli álā sayyidinā wa nabiyyinā wa mawlānā Ashraf Álī***; and Ashraf Álī assures him that it only indicates that the person he turns to [meaning Ashraf Álī himself] is a strict follower of the Prophet's tradition.

This is in the periodical ***Al-Imdād***, Ṣafar 1336, Page 35



Tadhkiratu'l Khalīl

This book is compiled by Áāshiq Ilāhī Meeruti, the following excerpt is found on page 146 of an edition published from Sahāranpūr. This seems to be a first-person account of the famous debate at Bahāwalpūr in 1306 AH between Sunnīs led by Mawlānā Ghulām Dastagīr Qaṣūrī (a Sunni scholar and senior to Alahazrat) and Deobandis represented by Khalīl Aĥmad, who brags about his 'proofs' and debating skill in this lengthy account of that debate, similar to his empty boasts and lies about *Muhannad*. If Khalīl was such a proficient debater and his mastery of this topic of *imkān kadhib* was consummate, then why did he not debate or refute Alahazrat Imām Aĥmad Riđā or his classic *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ*? Anyway, when Deobandis claimed victory in that debate, Mawlānā Ghulām Dastagīr published a notice in newspapers challenging Deobandis to debate in front of Raĥmatullāh Kairānwī and Ĥājī Imdādullāh in Makkah, or do an imprecation [*mubāhalah*] which was not taken up; thereafter, Mawlānā Qaṣūrī went to Ĥajj in 1307 and he translated the proceedings of the debate into Arabic, *Taqdīs al-Wakīl*,[681] which was reviewed and attested by Mawlānā Raĥmatullāh Kairānwī, who wrote:

> For a long time now, I have been hearing things about Maulavi Rashīd Aĥmad, which were not good according to me. I did not believe that he would have said such things – and forbade Maulvi Ábd al-Samīý, a student of mine, in my correspondence until he came here to Makkah. I would advise him to stay away from disputes and to consider the scholars of Deoband as his elders. But how far could the poor man forbear and how could he refrain after seeing all those things which have now reached me – I am forced to say that keeping quiet after [seeing and hearing those things] is against religious uprightness. I used to think that Rashīd was a guided person [*rashīd*] but he turned out to be contrary to my expectation...

In this very endorsement, he mentions that Rashīd Aĥmad did not do takfīr of Mirzā Qādiyānī in the beginning and called him a "righteous man," even after the apostate of Qādiyān had uttered blasphemies. Mawlānā Raĥmatullāh was also well aware of the manner of Deobandis, and their guru Rashīd Aĥmad Gangohī; therefore he said:

> I know that I will be insulted and cursed openly; but when the majority of scholars and righteous men, accomplished awliyā'a and the Messenger of the Lord of all worlds and even the Creator Himself are not spared from their tongues and pens, it would be pointless for me to complain.[682]

Mawlānā Ghulām Dastagīr apparently posed an objection that a slave [human] can steal, can drink wine, can be ignorant and can oppress; according to Deobandi claim of Divine Power, would they claim that it is also in Divine Power to do such abominable things? – and in the below 'refutation', the Deobandi[683] asks why should it not be within Divine Power? If you say that stealing, drinking wine, being ignorant or oppression are precluded from Divine Power, it is as if you have diminished the Power of the Almighty – and consequently, Divine Power would be lesser than power of humans. *al-iyādhu billāh*.

Stealing, drinking wine, ignorance and oppression – to oppose this is also a product of a lack of understanding; because it appears that for Ghulām Dastagīr, it is not necessary for the Power of God to be greater than the power of His slaves; nor God's power over things [*maqdūrāt*] greater than a slave's power over things; even though it is a

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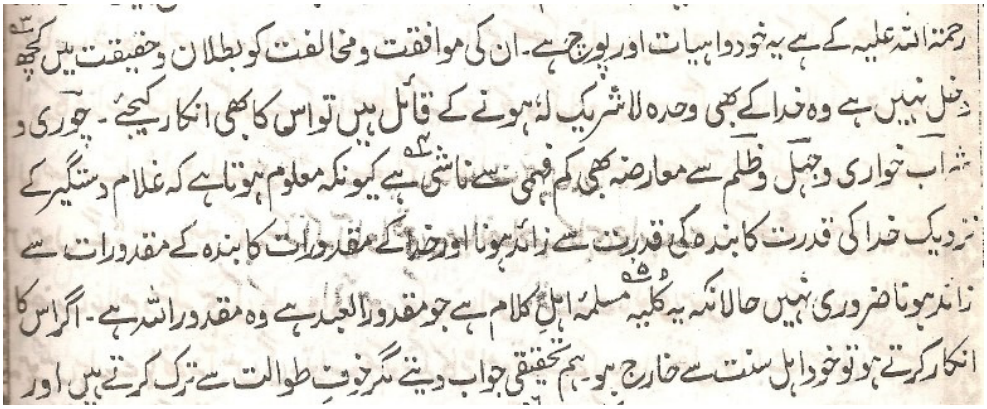
[681] According to the author, he started working on it in 1307 and completed it in 1308; the quotes are from the 1314 edition.

[682] *Taqdīs al-Wakīl*, p307 and p309.

[683] It is most likely the first person account of Khalīl himself or paraphrased by Áāshiq Ilāhī Meeruti.

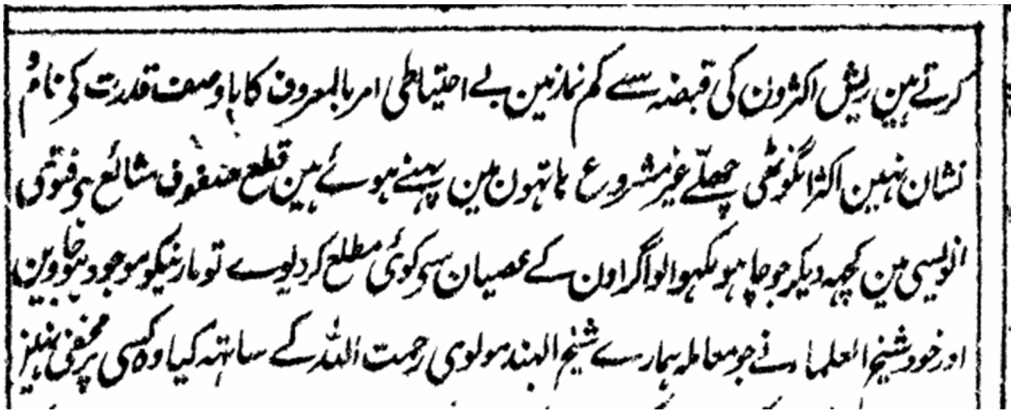
generally accepted principle among kalām scholars that whatever is in the power of the slave [*maqdūr al-ábd*] is also within the power of God.


رحمۃ اللہ علیہ کے ہے یہ خود واہیات اور پوچ ہے۔ ان کی موافقت و مخالفت کو بطلان و حقیقت میں کچھ
دخل نہیں ہے وہ خدا کے بھی وحدہ لاشریک لہٗ ہونے کے قائل ہیں تو اس کا بھی انکار کیجئے۔ چوری و
شراب خواری و جہل و ظلم سے معارضہ بھی کم فہمی سے ناشی ہے کیونکہ معلوم ہوتا ہے کہ غلام دستگیر کے
نزدیک خدا کی قدرت کا بندہ کی قدرت سے زائد ہونا اور خدا کے مقدورات کا بندہ کے مقدورات سے
زائد ہونا ضروری نہیں حالانکہ یہ کلیہ مسلمہ اہل کلام ہے جو مقدور العبد ہے وہ مقدور اللہ ہے۔ اگر اس کا
انکار کرتے ہو تو خود اہل سنت سے خارج ہو۔ ہم تحقیقی جواب دیتے مگر خوف طوالت سے ترک کرتے ہیں اور

Appendix D

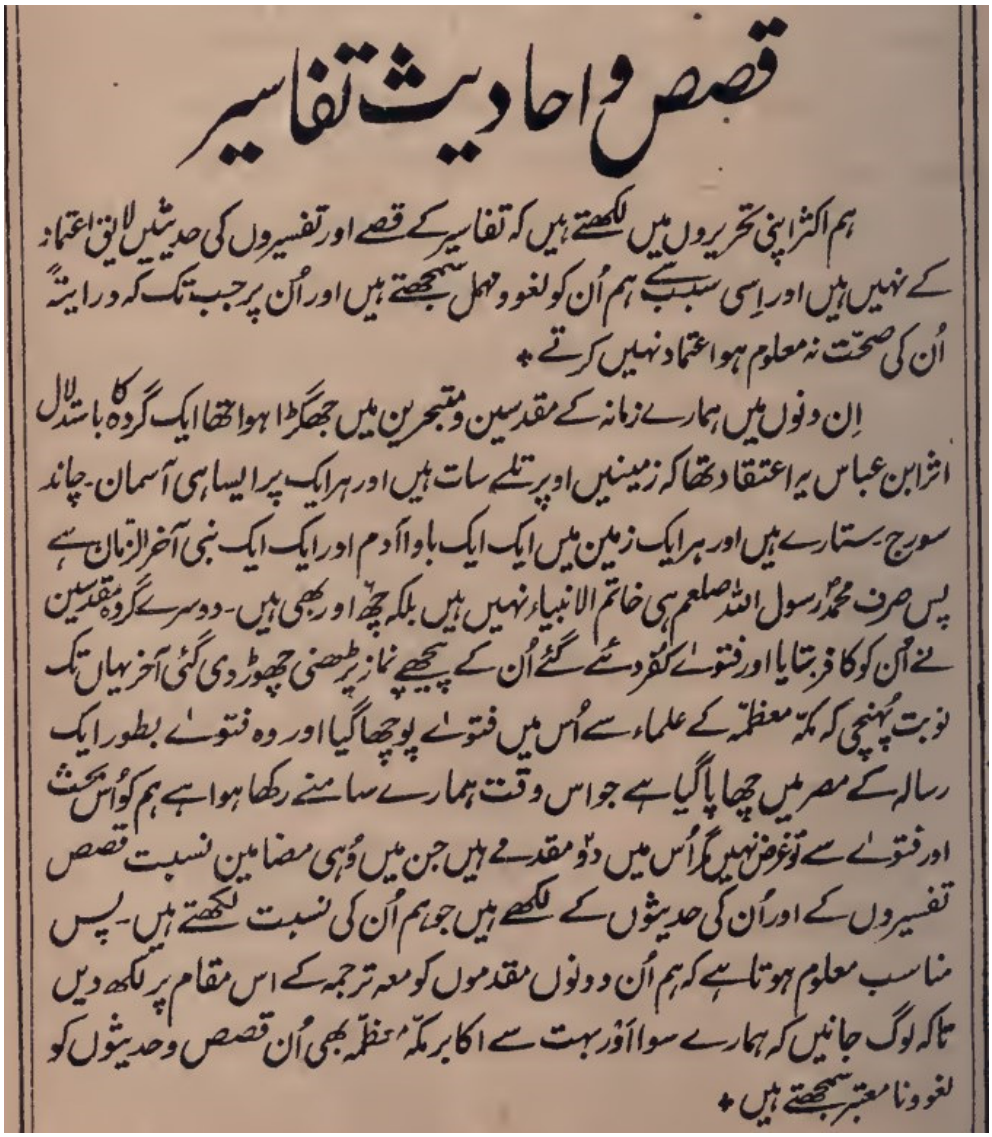
MORE EXHIBITS

Khalīl Ambethwi accuses scholars of Ĥaramayn of corruption in *Barāhīn al-Qāṭiáh* p18 .



کرتے ہین ریش اکثرون کی قبضہ سے کم نمازین بے احتیاطی امر بالمعروف کا باوصف قدرت کے نام و
نشان نہین اکثر انگوٹھی چھلے غیر مشروع ہاتھون مین پہنے ہوئے ہین قطع مصنوف شائع ہے فتوی
انویسی مین کچھہ دیکر جو چاہو لکھوالو اگر اون کے عصیان سے کوئی مطلع کردیوے تو مارنیکو موجود ہوجاوین
اور خود شیخ العلما نے جو معاملہ ہمارے شیخ الہند مولوی رحمت اللہ کے ساتھہ کیا وہ کسی پر مخفی نہیں

Sir Syed's *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq* mentions the controversy on page 365:

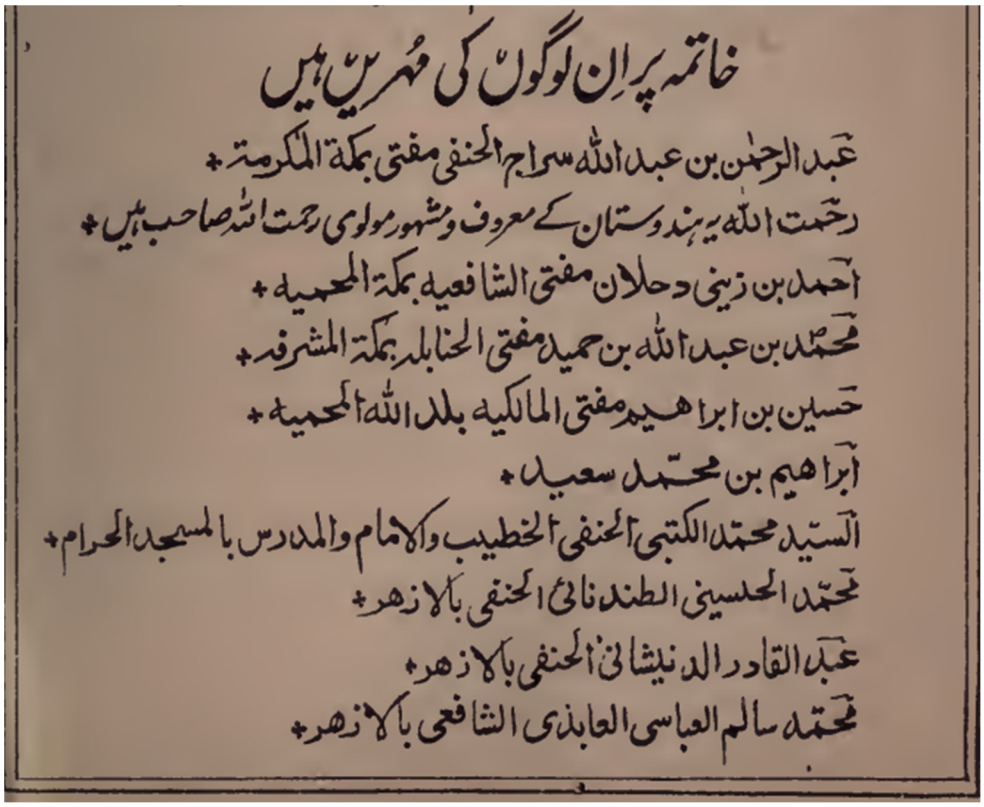


قصص و احادیث تفاسیر

ہم اکثر اپنی تحریروں میں لکھتے ہیں کہ تفاسیر کے قصے اور تفسیروں کی حدیثیں لائق اعتماد کے نہیں ہیں اور اسی سبب سے ہم اُن کو لغو و مہمل سمجھتے ہیں اور اُن پر جب تک کہ درایۃً اُن کی صحت نہ معلوم ہو اعتماد نہیں کرتے ۔

اِن دنوں میں ہمارے زمانہ کے مقدسین و متبحرین میں جھگڑا ہوا تھا ایک گروہ کا باستدلال اثر ابن عباس یہ اعتقاد تھا کہ زمینیں اوپر تلے سات ہیں اور ہر ایک پر ایسا ہی آسمان۔ چاند سورج۔ ستارے ہیں اور ہر ایک زمین میں ایک ایک باوا آدم اور ایک ایک نبی آخر الزمان ہے پس صرف محمد رسول اللہ صلعم ہی خاتم الانبیاء نہیں ہیں بلکہ چھ اور بھی ہیں۔ دوسرے گروہ مقدسین نے اُن کو کافر بتایا اور فتوے کفر دئے گئے اُن کے پیچھے نماز پڑھنی چھوڑ دی گئی آخر یہاں تک نوبت پہنچی کہ مکہ معظمہ کے علماء سے اُس میں فتوے پوچھا گیا اور وہ فتوے بطور ایک رسالہ کے مصر میں چھاپا گیا ہے جو اس وقت ہمارے سامنے رکھا ہوا ہے ہم کو اُس بحث اور فتوے سے تو غرض نہیں مگر اُس میں دو مقدمے ہیں جن میں وہی مضامین نسبت قصص تفسیروں کے اور اُن کی حدیثوں کے لکھے ہیں جو ہم اُن کی نسبت لکھتے ہیں۔ پس مناسب معلوم ہوتا ہے کہ ہم اُن دونوں مقدموں کو معہ ترجمہ کے اس مقام پر لکھ دیں تاکہ لوگ جانیں کہ ہمارے سوا اور بہت سے اکابر مکہ معظمہ بھی اُن قصص و حدیثوں کو لغو و نامعتبر سمجھتے ہیں ۔

Sir Syed's *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq* mentions scholars who attested fatwā of Shaykh Ábd al-Raĥmān Sirāj on page 368:

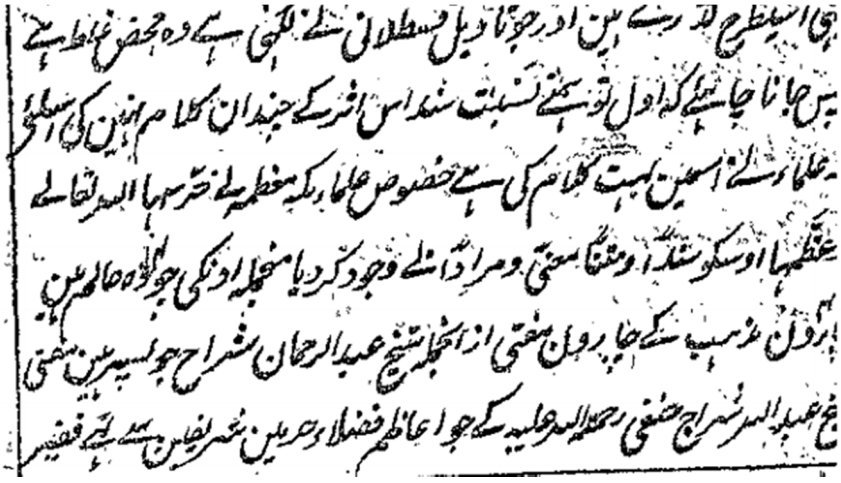


خاتمہ پر ان لوگوں کی مُہریں ہیں

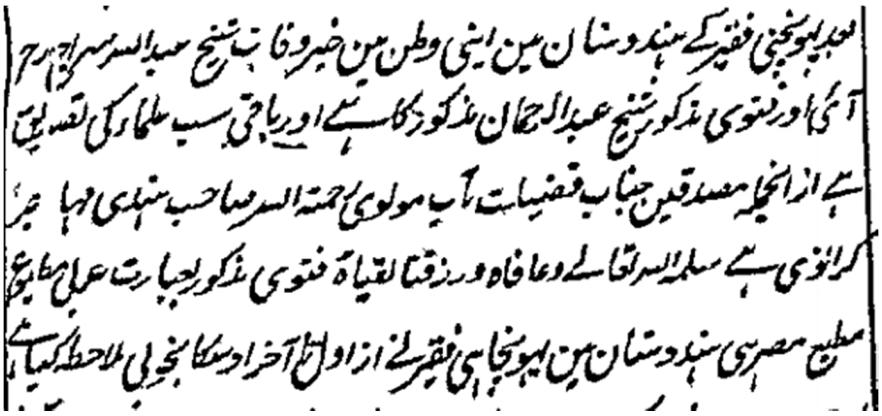
عبد الرحمن بن عبد اللہ سراج الحنفی مفتی بمکۃ المکرمۃ +
رحمت اللہ یہ ہندوستان کے معروف و مشہور مولوی رحمت اللہ صاحب ہیں +
احمد بن زینی دحلان مفتی الشافعیہ بمکۃ المحمیہ +
محمد بن عبد اللہ بن حمید مفتی الحنابلہ بمکۃ المشرفہ +
حسین بن ابراھیم مفتی المالکیہ بلد اللہ المحمیہ +
ابراھیم بن محمد سعید +
السید محمد الکتبی الحنفی الخطیب والامام والمدرس بالمسجد الحرام +
محمد الحسینی الطندنائی الحنفی بالازھر +
عبد القادر الدنیشانی الحنفی بالازھر +
محمد سالم العباسی العابدی الشافعی بالازھر +

Shaykh Muĥammad Thānawī's *Qistās:*

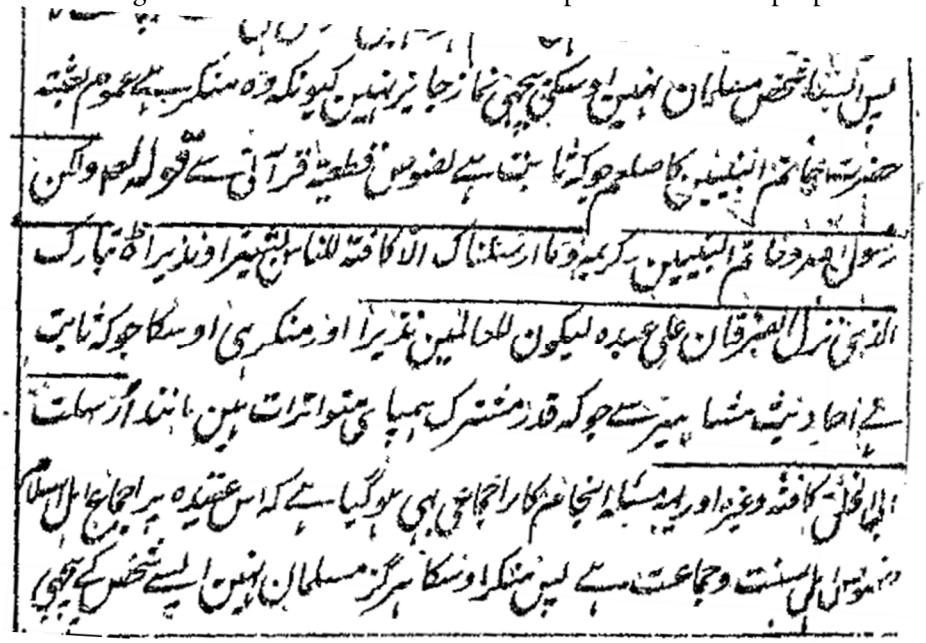
Shaykh Muĥammad Thānawī mentions Shaykh Ábd al-Raĥmān Sirāj on page 241 of *Qistās*:



And on the following page, the fatwā and attestation of Shaykh Raĥmatullāh Kairānwī (p242):



And a fatwā on page 271 making takfir of those who believe in multiple 'seals' or final prophets.



Alahazrat on page 80 of *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ*, written in 1307 and first published in 1309, withholds from takfīr on *imkān al-kadhib*:

خاتمہ بتحقیق حکم قائلین

اقول وباللہ التوفیق اللھم غفرانا الضلال والکفر جانِ برادر یہہ پوچھتا ہے کہ انکا یہہ
عقیدہ کیسا اور انکے پیچھے نماز کا حکم کیا ہے یہہ پوچھ کہ ان امام و ماموم پر ایک جماعت ائمہ کی
نزدیک کتنی وجہ سے کفر آتا ہے حاشا للہ حاشا للہ ہزار ہزار بار حاشا للہ میں ہرگز انکی تکفیر پسند
نہیں کرتا ان مقتدیون یعنی مدعیان جدید کو تو ابھی تک مسلمان ہی جانتا ہون اگرچہ انکی بدعت
وضلالت میں شک نہیں اور امام الطائفہ کے کفر پر بھی حکم نہیں کرتا کہ ہمیں ہمارے نبی صلی اللہ
تعالی علیہ وسلم نے اہل لا الہ الا اللہ کی تکفیر سے منع فرمایا ہے جب تک وجہ کفر آفتاب سے
زیادہ روشن وجلی نہو جائے اور حکم اسلام کے لیے اصلا کوئی ضعیف سا ضعیف محمل بھی رہے
فان الاسلام یعلو ولا یعلی مگر یہہ کہتا ہون اور بیشک کہتا ہون کہ بلاریب ان تابع ومتبوع
سب پر ایک گروہ علماء کے مذاہب میں بوجوہ کثیرہ کفر لازم والعیاذ باللہ ذی الفضل العظیم

I seek Allāh's refuge. And a thousand times: ĥāshā lillāh! I certainly do not like to make takfīr of these people. Even until now, I still consider these followers[684] and modern claimants[685] as Muslims, even though there is no doubt in their heresy and waywardness. Neither do I issue the ruling of kufr upon the leader of their sect;[686] because our Prophet ﷺ has warned us from making takfīr of those who say: ***lā ilāha illā Allāh***. We do not rule them kāfir, as long as we do not possess proof as obvious and glaringly apparent as the mid-day sun; and [withhold from takfīr] until the remotest possibility remains to absolve them from kufr. Because Islām will certainly prevail and it cannot be subdued. Yet, I say: Indeed and undoubtedly, according to a group of scholars, the ruling of kufr is impending upon them due to numerous reasons.

Alahazrat on page 62 of *Kawkabatu'sh Shihābiyyah*, printed in 1312, withholds takfīr of Ismāýīl:

یعنی وہابیہ اسمٰعیلیہ اور اسکے امام نافرجام پر جزماً قطعاً یقیناً اجماعاً بوجوہ کثیرہ کفر
لازم اور بلاشبہہ جماہیر فقہاے کرام واصحاب فتوے اکابر واعلاء کی تصریحات واضحہ
پر یہ سب کے سب مرتد کافر باجماع ائمہ ان سب پر اپنے تمام کفریات سے بالتصریح
توبہ ورجوع اور از سر نو کلمہ اسلام پڑھنا فرض وواجب اگرچہ ہمارے نزدیک مقام
احتیاط میں اکفار سے کف لسان ماخوذ ومختار ومرضی ومناسب واللہ سبحنہ وتعالی اعلم
وعلمہ جل مجدہ اتم واحکم الحمد للہ کہ یہ اجمالی اجلالی جواب باصواب غرہ جمادی الآخرہ
روز مبارک جمعہ فاخرہ ۱۳۱۲ھ ہجریہ طاہرہ کو بدرستم اختتام اور بلحاظ تاریخ الکوکبۃ
الشہابیہ فی کفریات ابی الوہابیہ نام ہوا نسال اللہ تعالی

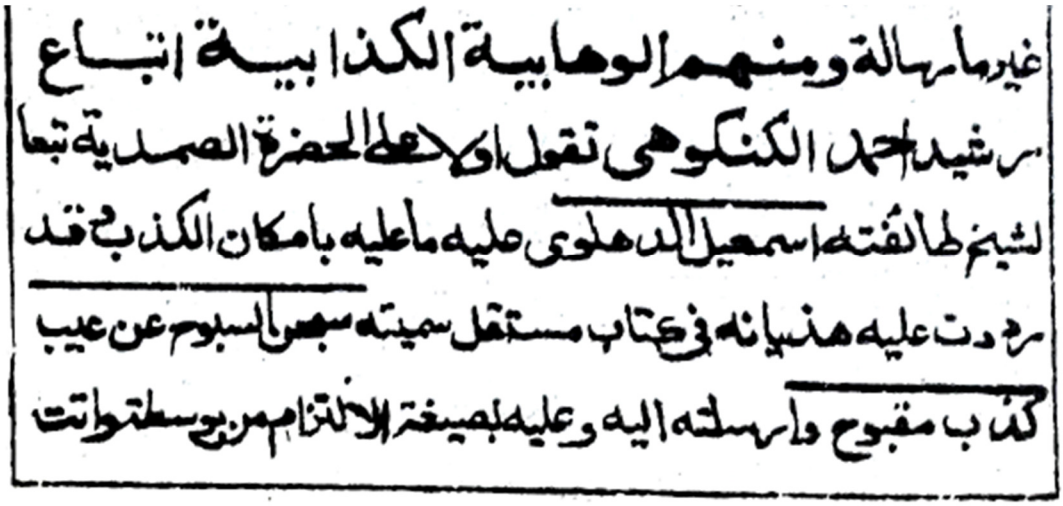
In my opinion, the state of utmost caution bids us to withhold our tongue from declaring him as kāfir; and this is the preferred and most suitable opinion. And Allāh táālā knows best.

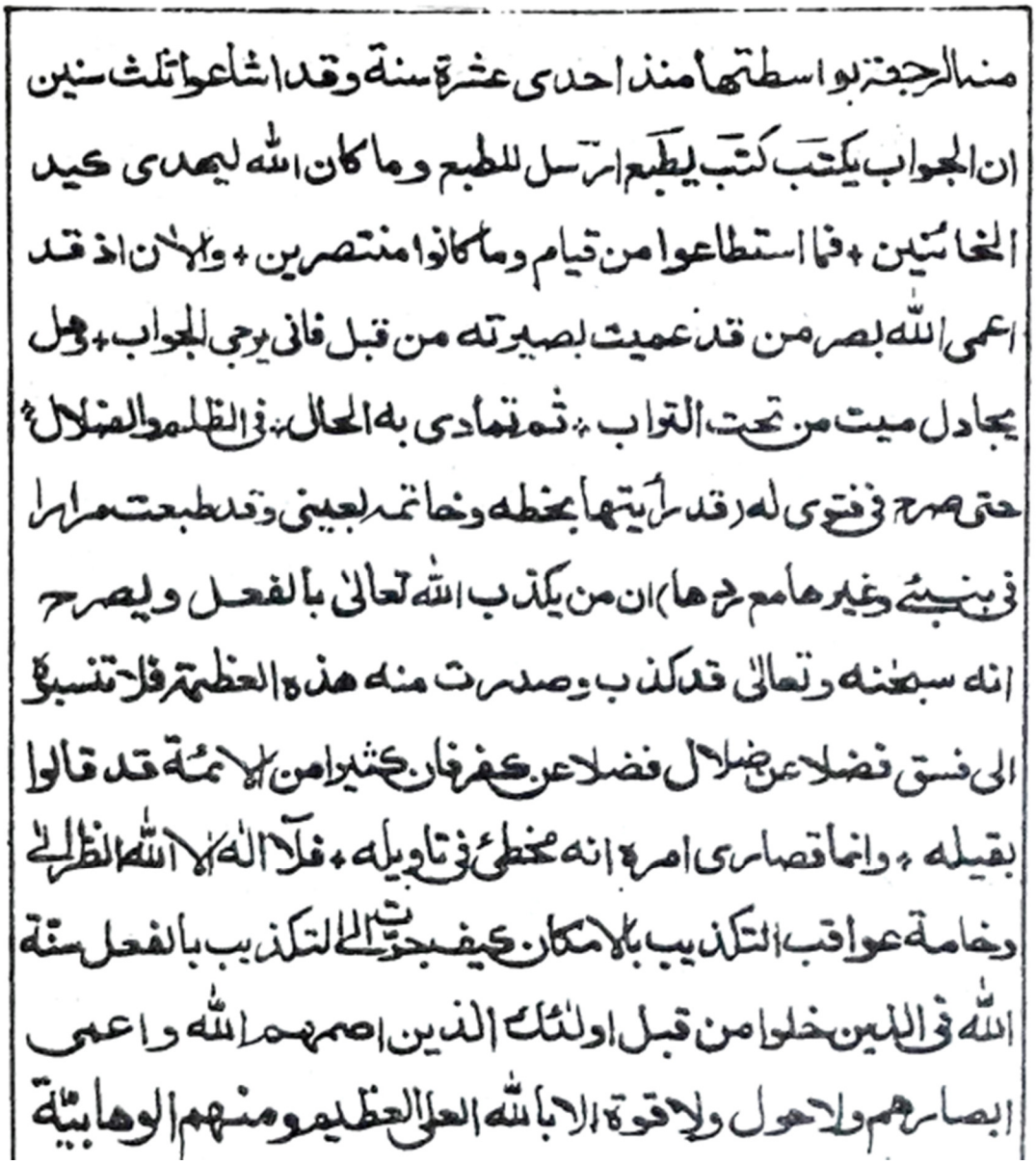
[684] Followers of Ismāýīl Dihlawī; that is Gangohī, Ambethwī and other Deobandi followers.

[685] Modern claimants of the dead and buried Mútazilī belief of falsehood being included in Divine Power.

[686] Ismāýīl Dihlawī.

Alahazrat on page 19-21 of *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*, 1325 AH:


غیر ما رسالة ومنهم الوهابیة الکذابیة اتباع
رشید احمد الکنکوهی نقل او لاحظ الحضرة الصمدیة تبعا
لشیخ طائفته اسمعیل الدهلوی علیه ما علیه بامکان الکذب وقد
ردت علیه هذیانه فی کتاب مستقل سمیته سبحان السبوح عن عیب
کذب مقبوح وارسلته الیه وعلیه بصیغة الالتزام من بوسطن واتت


منا الرجفة بواسطتها منذ احدی عشرة سنة وقد اشاعوا ثلث سنین
ان الجواب یکتب کتب یطبع ارسل للطبع وما کان الله لیهدی کید
الخائنین ۔ فما استطاعوا من قیام وما کانوا منتصرین ۔ والآن اذ قد
اعمی الله بصر من قد عمیت بصیرته من قبل فانی یرجی الجواب ۔ وهل
یجادل میت من تحت التراب ۔ ثم تمادی به الحال فی الظلم والضلال
حتی صرح فی فتوی له (قد رأیتها بخطه وخاتمه بعینی وقد طبعت مرارا
فی بنبئی وغیرها مع ردها) ان من یکذب الله تعالی بالفعل ویصرح
انه سبحٰنه وتعالی قد کذب وصدرت منه هذه العظیمة فلا تنسبوه
الی فسق فضلا عن ضلال فضلا عن کفر فان کثیرا من الائمة قد قالوا
بقیله ۔ وانما قصاری امره انه مخطئ فی تاویله ۔ فلا الٰه الا الله الظالم
وخامة عواقب التکذیب بالامکان کیف جرت الی التکذیب بالفعل سنة
الله فی الذین خلوا من قبل اولئك الذین اصمهم الله واعمی
ابصارهم ولا حول ولا قوة الا بالله العلی العظیم ومنهم الوهابیة

This is the fatwā of Muftī Jalāluddīn Aĥmad Amjadi in full, *Fatāwā Faqīh e Millat*, volume 1, p434-435, printed in 2005 by Shabbir Brothers publishing house.

مسئلہ:- از: محمد مختار احمد، جرول روڈ، بہرائچ

کیا فرماتے ہیں علمائے دین ومفتیان شرع متین مندرجہ ذیل مسئلہ میں کہ زید سنی صحیح العقیدہ ہے اور وہ اپنی شادی دیوبندی کی لڑکی سے کرنا چاہتا ہے اور وہ لڑکی سنیہ بننے کے لئے تیار ہے کیا اس کے وہاں شادی ہوسکتی ہے یا نہیں؟ نیز لڑکا اور لڑکی شادی کے لئے رضامند ہیں شادی نہ ہونے کی صورت میں دونوں خودکشی کرلیں گے اور شادی اسی صورت میں ہوسکتی ہے کہ باراتی اس کے وہاں کھانا کھائیں اگر زید خود کھانے کا انتظام لڑکی کے گھر کردے تو لڑکی والے اس میں اپنی بے عزتی تصور کرتے ہیں اور شادی نہ ہونے کی صورت پیدا ہوجاتی ہے اور شادی نہ ہونے کے بعد انجام کیا ہوگا یعنی دونوں خودکشی کریں گے۔ ایسی صورت میں علمائے دین کیا فرماتے ہیں کیا شادی ہوسکتی ہے کہ نہیں؟ نیز سنی قاضی نکاح پڑھا سکتا ہے کہ نہیں؟ بینوا توجروا.

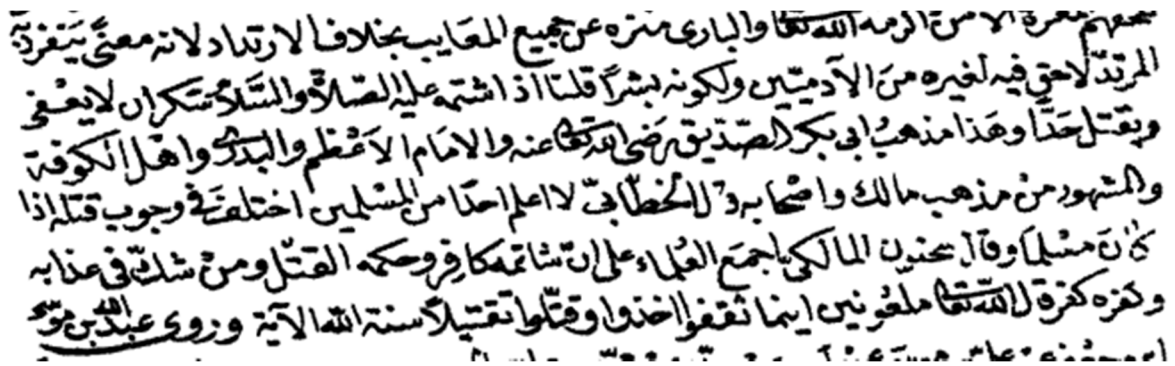
الجواب:- دیوبندی اپنے کفریات قطعیہ مندرجہ حفظ الایمان صفحہ ۸، تحذیر الناس صفحہ ۳، ۱۴، ۲۸ اور براہین قاطعہ صفحہ ۵۱ کے سبب بر طابق فتویٰ حسام الحرمین کافر ومرتد ہیں اور مرتد سے نکاح ہرگز جائز نہیں۔ فتاویٰ عالمگیری جلد اول مطبوعہ مصر صفحہ ۲۸۲ میں ہے: "لایجوز للمرتد ان یتزوج مرتدة و لا مسلمة و لاکافرة اصلیة و کذلك لایجوز نکاح المرتدة مع احد کذا فی المبسوط." یعنی مرتد کا نکاح مرتدہ، مسلمہ اور کافرہ اصلیہ کسی سے جائز نہیں۔ ایسے ہی مرتدہ کا نکاح کسی سے نہیں ہوسکتا۔ اسی طرح امام محمد علیہ الرحمۃ والرضوان کی کتاب مبسوط میں ہے۔

لہذا سنی صحیح العقیدہ لڑکا کی شادی دیوبندی لڑکی سے ہرگز نہیں ہوسکتی اگرچہ وہ سنی ہونے کے لئے تیار ہے اس لئے کہ اس طرح کے موقع پر دیوبندی اپنا مطلب نکالنے کے لئے بظاہر سنی بن جاتے ہیں مگر حقیقت میں وہ اپنے مذہب پر قائم رہتے ہیں اور کچھ دنوں بعد اپنے رشتہ دار کو دیوبندی بنا لیتے ہیں۔ ہاں اگر لڑکی کے سنی ہونے کے ساتھ اس کے گھر والے بھی سنی صحیح العقیدہ ہو جائیں تو دو تین سال تک دیکھا جائے کہ وہ سنیت پر قائم ہیں یا نہیں۔ جب خوب اطمینان ہو جائے کہ وہ سنیت پر قائم ہیں تب ان سے رشتہ ہوسکتا ہے اس سے پہلے ہرگز اجازت نہیں جیسے کہ شراب پینے والا اگر توبہ کرلے تو فوراً اسے امام نہیں بنا دیا جائے گا۔ بلکہ اطمینان کے لئے کچھ روز اسے دیکھا جائے گا۔ فتاویٰ عالمگیری سے فتاویٰ رضویہ جلد سوم صفحہ ۲۱۳ میں ہے: "الفاسق اذا تاب لاتقبل شهادته ما لم یمض علیه زمان یظهر علیه اثر التوبة." یعنی فاسق توبہ کرلے تب بھی اس کی گواہی نہیں قبول کی جائے گی جب تک کہ اتنا وقت نہ گذر جائے کہ اس پر توبہ کا اثر ظاہر ہو۔

اور خودکشی کی دھمکی پر بھی کسی بدمذہب اور مرتد کے ساتھ شادی کرنے کی اجازت شریعت ہرگز نہیں دے سکتی ورنہ ہر وہ شخص جوان کے یہاں شادی کرنا چاہے گا خودکشی کی دھمکی دے کر کرلے گا۔ تو امان اٹھ جائے گا۔ اور وہ اگر واقعی خودکشی کرے گا تو اسلام وسنیت کا کچھ نہیں بگڑے گا اپنی عاقبت برباد کرے گا جہنمی ہوجائے گا۔ غرضیکہ کسی حال میں دیوبندی کے یہاں شادی کرنے کے لئے شریعت کی اجازت نہیں خواہ زید خود لڑکی کے گھر کھانے کا انتظام کرے۔ اگر زید دیوبندی کی لڑکی کے ساتھ شادی کرنے سے باز نہ آئے تو سارے مسلمانوں پر لازم ہے کہ اس کا سخت سماجی بائیکاٹ کریں۔ اور اس کے کسی کام میں ہرگز شرکت نہ کریں۔ خدائے تعالیٰ کا ارشاد ہے: "وَ اِمَّا یُنْسِیَنَّكَ الشَّیْطٰنُ فَلَا تَقْعُدْ بَعْدَ الذِّكْرٰى مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظّٰلِمِیْنَ". (پ ۷ ع ۱۴)

و اللہ تعالیٰ اعلم.

Fatāwā Khayriyyah, 1/109



Fatāwā Bazzāziyyah, 6/322

فيه لغيره من الآدميين ولكنه قلنا اذا شتمه عليه الصلاة والسلام سكران لا يعفى ويقتل أيضا حدا وهذا مذهب أبي بكر الصديق رضي الله عنه والامام الاعظم والثوري وأهل الكوفة والمشهور من مذهب مالك وأصحابه قال الخطابي لا أعلم أحدا من المسلمين اختلف في وجوب قتله اذا كان مسلما وقال ابن سحنون المالكي (٣٢٣) أجمع العلماء أن شاتمه كافر وحكمه القتل ومن شك في عذابه وكفره كفر قال الله تعالى فيه

Durar al-Ĥukkām, 1/300

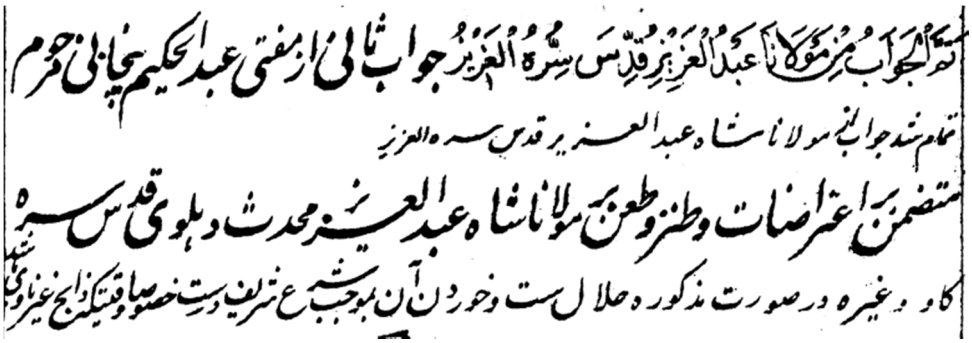
كسائر حقوق الآدميين وكحد القذف لا يزول بالتوبة بخلاف ما اذا سب الله تعالى ثم تاب لانه حق الله تعالى ولان النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بشر والبشر جنس تلحقه المعرة الا من أكرمه الله تعالى والباري تعالى منزه عن جميع المعايب وبخلاف الارتداد لانه معنى ينفرد به المرتد ولكونه حق الغير قلنا اذا شتمه سكران لا يعفى ويقتل أيضا حدا وهذا مذهب أبي بكر الصديق رضي الله تعالى عنه والامام الاعظم والثوري واهل الكوفة والمشهور من مذهب مالك وأصحابه قال الخطابي لا اعلم أحدا من المسلمين اختلف في وجوب قتله اذا كان مسلما وقال ابن سحنون المالكي اجمع العلماء ان شاتمه كافر وحكمه القتل ومن شك في عذابه وكفره كفر كذا في الفتاوى البزازية وقد استوفى الكلام في هذا الباب في

Durr al-Mukhtār, p345

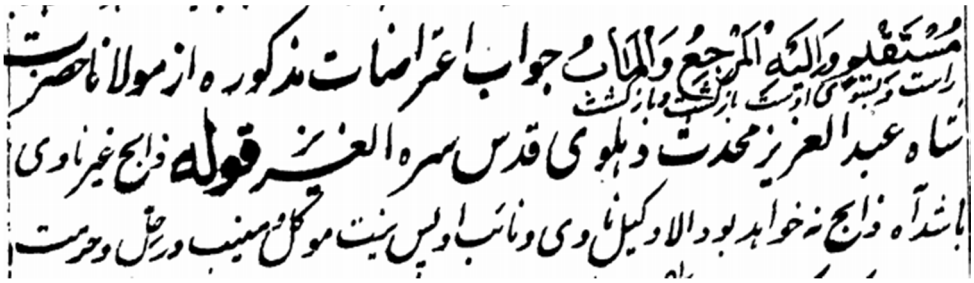
(وكل مسلم ارتد فتوبته مقبولة إلاَّ) جماعة: من تكررت ردته على ما مرَّ، و(الكافر بسبّ نبي) من الأنبياء فإنه يقتل حداً ولا تقبل توبته مطلقاً، ولو سبّ الله تعالى قبلت لأنَّه حقّ الله تعالى، والأول حق عبد لا يزول بالتوبة، ومن شك في عذابه وكفره كفر، وتمامه

These scans are from *Zubdatu'n Nasāyiĥ*, published in 1267 AH, which contains the reply of Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz Dihlawī to objections by Muftī Ábd al-Ĥakīm Punjābī.

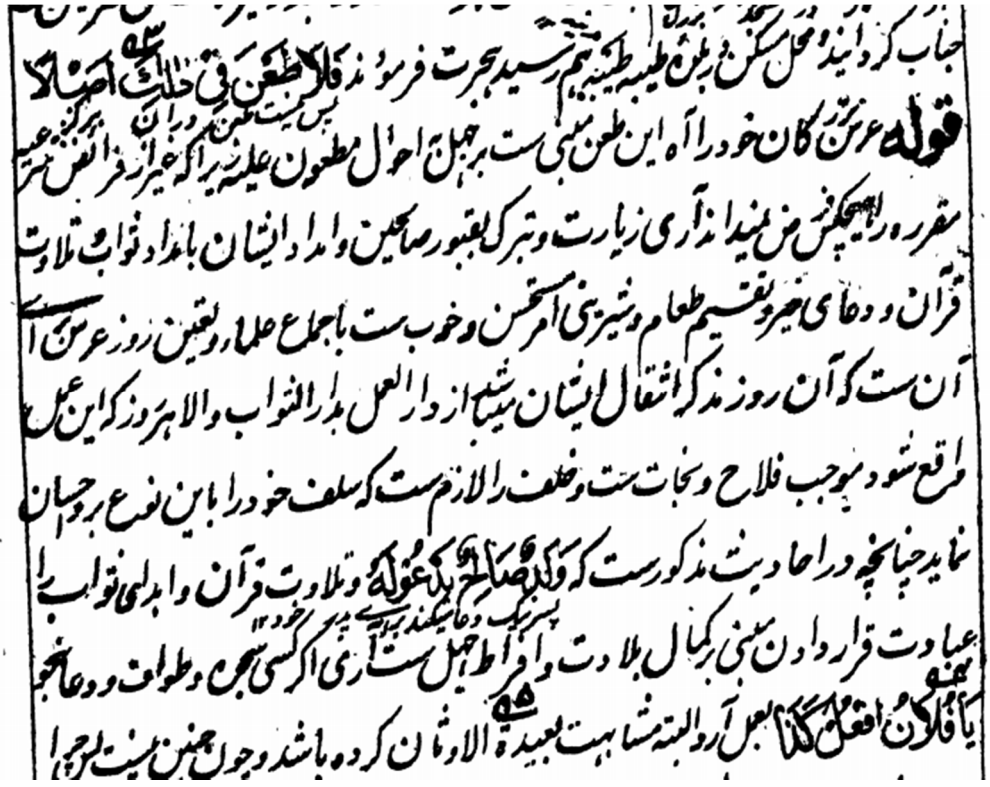
Page 17



Page 36



Page 42



Scans from *Úmdatu Ahl al-Tawfīq wa't Tasdīd* of Imām Sanūsī also known as *Sharĥ al-Kubrā of Sanūsī,* with marginalia of Shaykh Ismāýīl al-Ĥāmidī.

Page 455:

Text:[687]

...Considering the second case,[688] [implying] contradiction in His information – Glorified and Exalted is He – to endorse a liar [as truthful] is itself a lie; and falsehood is *muĥāl* for Him ﷻ; because everything that He has informed is according to His Knowledge and therefore truth – and the forfeiture [of truth] would mean forfeiture of Knowledge that necessitates it; and this is *muĥāl* as you know already that it is *wājib*.[689]

(ص) وهل دلالة المعجزة على صدق الرسل دلالة عقلية أو وضعية أو عادية بحسب القرائن أقوال . أما على الأوّلين فيستحيل صدورها على يد الكاذب لما يلزم على الأوّل من نقض الدليل العقلى ، وعلى الثانى من الخلف فى خبره جل وعلا إذ تصديق الكاذب كذب والكذب عليه جل وعلا محال ، لأن خبره على وفق علمه فيكون صدقا فلو انتفى لانتفى العلم ملزومه ، وهو محال لما عرفت من وجوبه .

Page 456:

If you say: We have seen amongst us, someone who knows [about something] can give false information about it. We reply: our argument is about the very [act] of giving information – not about words themselves, because such an attribute for the Creator ﷻ is impossible [*mustaĥīl*].

...Also, if we could attribute the Creator ﷻ with falsehood, and all His Attributes are Pre-eternal [*qadīmah*]; which would mean that Truth is impossible [*istiĥālah*] for Him – even though it is established[690] that He is attributed with Truth because Knowledge is a necessary attribute for Allāh táālā; thus it would necessitate [Truth as] impossible even though you know that Truth is validated [as a necessary attribute].

فان قلت : قد وجدنا العالم منا بالشيء يخبر عنه بالكذب . قلنا كلامنا فى الخبر النفسى لا فى الألفاظ لاستحالة اتصاف البارى تعالى بها ، والعالم منا بالشيء يستحيل أن يخبر الجزء من قلبه الذى قام به العلم بخبر كذب على غير وفق علمه ، غايته أن يجد فى نفسه تقدير الكذب لا الكذب ، وأيضا لو اتصف البارى تعالى بالكذب ولا تكون صفته إلا قديمة لاستحال اتصافه بالصدق مع صحة اتصافه به لأجل وجوب العلم له تعالى ، ففيه استحالة ما علمت صحته .

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[687] ***ṣād*** abbreviation for *naṣṣ* or the main text; ***shīn*** is abbreviation for *sharĥ* or commentary.

[688] Which is being informed by Divine Speech – or Revelation

[689] That is among the fundamental precepts is to know that the Attribute of Knowledge is *wājib* and its opposite, absence of knowledge is *muĥāl*; thus if truth is absent, it would mean knowledge is absent.

[690] *ṣiĥĥati ittiṣāfihi*: it is correct and validated to attribute Him with Truth.

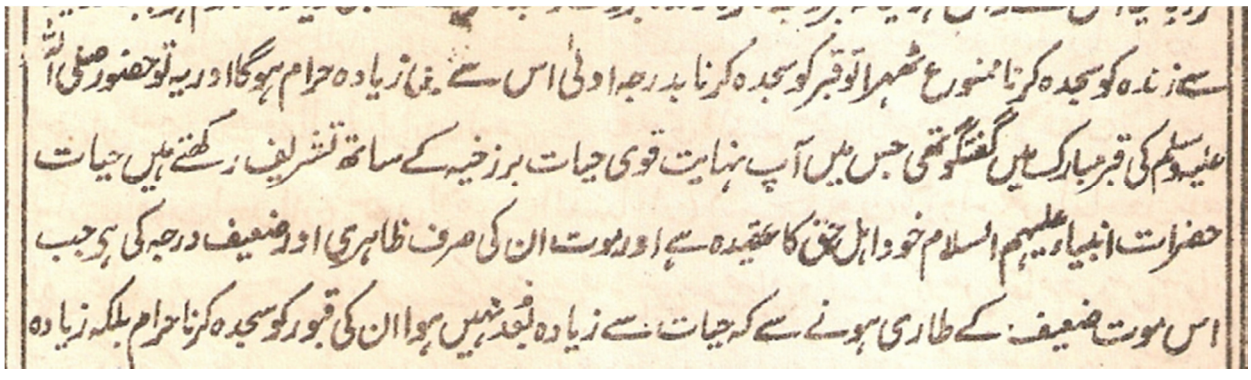
Alahazrat rightly commented that Wahābī/Deobandi idiots try to bring proof from those very texts in which their refutation is present.

Page 465 of Sanūsī's *Kubrā;* I have left it untranslated because the "falsehood" mentioned here is not about Allāh táālā; which proves that Keller is incapable of reading an Arabic passage but boasts of correcting errors in manuscripts.

٤٦٥

فأجابوا على مقتضى الوجهين . أما على الأوّل فقالوا : نعم يجوز للبارئ تعالى الاضلال ، لكن لابالمعجزة لاستحالة ذلك معها كما يجوز خلق السواد فى محل معين ، ولكن لامع وجود البياض والمعية فى النقيضين محال ، والاضلال بالدليل قلب الدليل شبهة ، والعلم الحاصل عنه جهلا وذلك محال . وأما على الثانى وهو أن الدليل من جهة المواضعة فقالوا : يجوز أن يضل لابالخلق فى القول واذا كانت المعجزة تنزل منزلة التصريح بكلام ناص على التصديق فلا يصح الاضلال به لاستحالة الخلف فى خبره تعالى ، فكذا لايصح الاضلال بما يدل على التصديق وان كان بحكم المواضعة . وأما على الرأى الثالث وهو أن دلالة المعجزة عادية فأمر الجواب أيضا سهل ، وهو أن آية صدق النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم حصول العلم لنا عن تلك المعجزة ، فاذا حصل انتفى معه احتمال عدم الصدق لأن العلم لايحتمل النقيض بوجه من الوجوه والا انقلب جهلا ، وتجويزنا عقلا كذب المحق الذى تيقنا صدقه لايقدح فى العلم بصدقه ، لأن معنى جواز الكذب فى حقه أنه لو وقع بدلا عن الصدق الواقع فى حقه لم يلزم منه محال لا أن معناه احتمال وقوع الكذب فى حقه ، وكثيرا مانعلم وقوع أشياء علما ضروريا مع تجويزنا عقلا نقيض ذلك الواقع ، وذلك كعلمنا بوجودنا فانه لايستريب فيه عاقل ، وان كنا نجوّز عدمنا بمعنى لواستمر عدمنا ولم نوجد أصلا لم يلزم منه محال لابمعنى أن عدمنا يحتمل الحصول لنا حال علمنا بوجودنا (قوله : فى حق المحق) الأولى تعلقه بخرق العادة : أى تجويزنا عقلا خرق العادة فى حق المحق بمعنى لو كان الواقع فى حقه الكذب بدلا عن الصدق

Ĥifż al-Īmān, p4 of Thānawī in which he describes life of RasūlAllāh in his blessed tomb as *barzakhiyyah*


سے زندہ کو سجدہ کرنا ممنوع ٹھہرا تو قبر کو سجدہ کرنا بدرجہ اولیٰ اس سے بھی زیادہ حرام ہوگا اور یہ تو حضور صلی اللہ
علیہ وسلم کی قبر مبارک میں گفتگو تھی جس میں آپ نہایت قوی حیات برزخیہ کے ساتھ تشریف رکھتے ہیں حیات
حضرات انبیاء علیہم السلام خود اہل حق کا عقیدہ ہے اور موت ان کی صرف ظاہری اور ضعیف درجہ کی ہے جب
اس موت ضعیف کے طاری ہونے سے کہ حیات سے زیادہ قوی نہیں ہوا ان کی قبور کو سجدہ کرنا حرام بلکہ زیادہ

Appendix E

EXTRACT FROM SHIFĀ: THINGS DEEMED DISBELIEF

From the section: *Sayings deemed disbelief, things that are debatable and differed upon and things that are not disbelief.*[691]

Know that investigation of this issue or clarification in this matter should be according to rulings of the sharīáh and there is no scope to make decisions here based on rational thought.

The clear and obvious [decision] in this matter is that anyone who explicitly negates that Allāh táālā is the Lord, the Creator, Sustainer or that He is One;[692] or [attests] worship of anyone other than Allāh táālā or [others] along with Him – is plain kufr. Like what the atheists say [they deny a God] and sayings of all the sects of dualists, like the *Dīṣāniyyah* or *Mānawiyyah*[693]and those similar to them among the Sabians, Christians, Magians and polytheists among those who worship idols or angels or Satan or the sun, the moon, the stars, fire; or any polytheist from Arab lands, India, China, Sudan or anywhere else whose roots are not in a revealed religion.[694] Similarly [among explicit kufr are beliefs of] the Qarāmitians,[695] Bāţinīs[696] and Ţayyāriyyah[697] sect of Rāfiđīs, who believe in immanence and metempsychosis.[698]

Similarly, those who acknowledge that Allāh táālā is the One and Only God, but also believe that He is not Living or He is not Eternal, or that He is an accident or that He is created or is anthropomorphic; or claims that He has a son or a wife or a father – or that He has come into existence from something else; or something else shall issue from him; or something else eternal was alongside in pre-etenity other than Him; or that someone else created the universe, or governs it, or sustains it, or has dominion over it – all of this is kufr by the unanimous agreement of all Muslims. For example, claims of [certain] philosophers believing in two gods, astrologers and naturalists;[699] and those who claim conference with Allāh táālā or going to him or ascension

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[691] *Kitāb al-Shifā*, Volume Two: Part Four, Chapter Two. Page 391.

[692] *rubūbiyyah – waĥdāniyyah.*

[693] Those who believe in two gods: light and darkness; the *Dīṣāniyyah* believe that god of light is living and the god of darkness is dead; whereas the *Mānawiyyah* say that both are living. [*Muzīl al-Khafā án Alfāż al-Shifā*, Ĥāfiż Shumunnī, d.872AH].

[694] *lā yarjiú ila'l kitāb*; Christians are also polytheists for worshipping Jesus ﷺ, but their [current] religion is based on a divinely revealed book which was corrupted later; in contrast to Hindus, Buddhists and Pagan Arabs who worshipped idols carved of their own fancies and myths.

[695] *Qarāmīţah*: The followers of Ĥamdan of Qarmat [d.321AH] which is itself a sub-sect of the Ismāýīlī Rāfiđah. Among their major doctrines is the annulment of sharīáh.

[696] *Bāţinī* one of the seven titles of Ismāýīlīs: According to Ábd al-Qāhir Jurjānī [d.429AH] they are heretics and apostates who are similar to atheists and believe in naturalism and that the universe is eternal (uncreated); they disbelieve in Messengers and divine laws [*sharāýiy*] and they incline toward permissibility of everything craved or desired by [human] nature. [*Farq bayn al-Firaq*, p221].

[697] Also known as *Janāĥiyyah* attributing themselves to the grandson of Ábdullāh ibn Jaáfar Ţayyār, 'he with two wings' [*dhi'l janāĥayn*]; they believe that the 'soul' of Allāh [*al-íyādhu billāh*] transferred into Sayyidunā Ādam and thereafter until Ábdullāh ibn Muáāwiyah ibn Ábdullāh ibn Jaáfar.

[698] *Ĥulūl wa't tanāsukh*: incarnation; believing in the indwelling of deity in certain persons, and the transmigration of souls.

[699] Which is prevalent in our time that 'nature' is responsible for everything that exists; and everything exits by itself without a creator and the universe sustains by itself.

and conversation with him;[700] or immanence of Allāh in some persons like the claims of false Sufis, Baţinīs, Christians, Qarāmiţians are all kufr [and those who profess these beliefs are kāfir] without any doubt.
Similarly, that which is absolute kufr is [belief] that the universe is pre-eternal and shall exist without an end; or has a doubt [that it is neither eternal nor everlasting] following the madh'hab of philosophers and atheists; or believes in transmigration of souls infinitely in certain persons; or that only souls are punished according to their purity or impurity. All those who believe such are absolutely kāfir.

Similarly, those who believe in one Supreme Diety, but reject prophets and prophethood entirely; or reject only the prophethood of our Prophet ﷺ; or reject prophethood of any prophet mentioned in the Qur'ān after being informed,[701] are all kāfirs without a shadow of doubt, like the Brahmins[702] or Jews[703] or the Urūsiyyah Christians[704] or the Ghurābiyyah[705] Rāfiđīs who claim that Sayyidunā Jibrīl ﷺ was sent to Álī ﷺ with the revelation; or the Qaramitians, Ismāýīlīs and Ánbariy[706] denominations of Rāfiđīs – [all of them are kāfir], along with being companions of their predecessors in other kufr[707] as well.

Similarly, those who attest in the Unity of God and accept all prophets including our Prophet ﷺ, but also believe that it is permissible for prophets to lie[708] and whatever they claimed or did not claim [falsely], are with beneficial intent [*maşlaĥah*] like philosophers, some among the Bāţinīs and Rawāfiđ, the extremist Sufis, and the libertines. They say: "the apparent rulings of sharīáh and most of what has been informed by the Prophets about the past or the future or the hereafter such as resurrection, apocalypse, paradise, hell are all figurative and metaphorical. They mentioned these things with the beneficial intent of preaching to people, because

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[700] Other than the ascension of RasūlAllāh ﷺ or the conversation of Sayyidunā Mūsā ﷺ.

[701] If an ignorant person doesn't know that Sayyidunā Ilyās or Sayyidunā Dhu'l Kifl or Sayyidunā Dhu'n Nūn [Yūnus] are prophets because he is unaware and denies it, he is not a kāfir according to some scholars, even though some others insist that ignorance is not an admissible excuse in doctrine and things deemed Essentials of Faith. However, after he is informed of their mention in the Qur'ān and if he refuses to believe in any of them, he is a kāfir without any doubt.

The names of twenty-five prophets are mentioned in *Áqīdah al-Áwām*: Aādam, Idrīs, Nūĥ, Hūd, Şāliĥ, Ibrāhīm, Lūţ, Ismāýīl, Is'ĥāq, Yáqūb, Yūsuf, Ayyūb, Shuáyb, Hārūn, Mūsā, Yasaá, Dhu'l Kifl, Dāwūd, Sulaymān, Ilyās, Yūnus, Zakariyyah, Yaĥyā, Ýīsā and Sayyidunā Muĥammad. عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَام.

It is necessary to believe in all prophets and messengers and it is recommended that we should not state an exact number of prophets; however, it is permissible to say: approximately 124,000 prophets. [*Sharĥ Fiqh al-Akbar, Sharĥ al-Áqāýid*].

[702] Hindus in general do not recognise prophets or prophethood.

[703] Jews deny the prophethood of Sayyidunā Ýīsā ﷺ and Sayyidunā Muĥammad ﷺ.

[704] Probably the ancient denomination of Christians, the Arians, who follow Arius of Alexandria who was the primary topic in the First Council of Nicea, and who opposed the Trinity. Here, Qāđī Íyāđ says that even though they are Unitarians, they are still kāfirs because of the refusal to believe in our Prophet ﷺ.

[705] *Ghurābiyyah*: This sect says that the Archangel Jibrīl ﷺ mistook Sayyidunā Muĥammad ﷺ for Mawlā Álī ﷺ and gave him the revelation. This was, according to them, because they resembled each other so much, like a crow [*ghurāb*] resembles another crow. Hence, the name of their sect.

[706] *Ánbariyyah*: Followers of Úbaydullāh ibn Ĥasan al-Ánbar.

[707] Such as slandering Sayyidah Āýishah ﷺ etc.

[708] Qāsim Nānotwī deems certain kinds of 'explicit lies' permissible for prophets as he says [*Taşfiyatu'l Áqāýid*, p22]:

> Explicit lies [*darogh e şarīĥ*] are also of many kinds and therefore, the ruling is not the same for all of those different kinds [of falsehood]. It is not necessary for a prophet to be immune [*máşūm*] from every kind [of explicit falsehood].

common people could not comprehend abstract concepts and were therefore described [by prophets] in physical terms." Such statements are invalidation of divine laws brought by prophets and a blatant rejection of commandments and prohibitions; falsification of prophets and planting doubts in the message brought by them. It is unanimously agreed [*ijmāá*] that all such people are kāfirs.

Similarly, if one says that our Prophet ﷺ deliberately uttered a lie in delivering the message or in anything that he has informed us; or doubts in his truthfulness or insults him or that he did not deliver the message or is disrespectful towards him or any other prophet; or finds fault with them or hurts them or murders a prophet or fights them or is hostile to them; such a person is a kāfir by ijmāá. Similarly we make takfīr of those who follow the madh'hab of the ancients who say that every species of living beings has a warner and prophet among them – [for instance, there is a prophet] among monkeys, pigs and animals, worms and maggots etc; and they try to prove their belief citing the verse:

وَإِن مِّنْ أُمَّةٍ إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٌ

There has never been a nation without a warner in their midst[709]

Because it implies that prophets can be attributed with such character and deplorable descriptions, which is derogatory to this exalted office [of prophethood] which is in flagrant opposition to the unanimous agreement of Muslims rejecting such proposition and that anyone who claims thus is a liar.

Similarly, we make takfir of such a person, who, even though accepts Islāmic principles in their [true form] as explained earlier, and acknowledges the prophethood of our Master ﷺ, but [also] says that the Prophet ﷺ was black,[710] or passed away before he attained maturity, or that he did not live in Makkah or Hijaz or that he was not from the Quraysh – because this would contradict his known attributes and this would imply denying him or falsification of his person ﷺ.

Similarly, if one claims prophethood along with our Prophet or after him like the *Ýīsawiyyah*[711] sect of Jews who say that the prophethood of RasūlAllāh ﷺ was limited only for the Arabs or the *Khurramiyyah* who claim that prophets keep coming unceasingly, like most of the Rāfiđīs who claim that Álī was a partner in the prophethood of RasūlAllāh ﷺ and after him; and every imām[712] near these people takes the place of prophets and carries that authority; or the *Bazīghiyyah* or *Bayāniyyah* among these Rāfiđīs who believe in the prophethood of Bizīgh and Bayān;[713] all such people are kāfir. Anyone who has similar beliefs concerning prophethood or claims to be a prophet himself, or believes that it is permissible to earn prophethood by cleansing the heart and attaining that lofty station; like the claims of philosophers and extremist sufis; also, those who claim that they receive revelation – even if he does not claim to be a prophet or that he rises in the

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[709] Sūrah Fāţir, 35:24.

[710] Álī al-Qārī: It is necessary to restrict this to someone who says this as a derogatory remark; but if one says so because of his ignorance about the attributes of the Prophet ﷺ, takfīr is not appropriate. Because, knowledge about the Prophet ﷺ being white [in complexion] is not absolute, nor is it an Essential of Faith. And being dark does not contradict prophethood anyway, as a group of scholars have held that Luqmān was a prophet [and he is known to be black].

[711] Followers of Ýīsā ibn Is'ĥāq ibn Yáqūb al-Aşbahānī, who claimed that the prophethood of RasūlAllāh ﷺ was specific only to Arabs.

[712] The twelve imams of Ahl al-Bayt.

[713] Bizīgh is unknown and Bayān is the son of Ismāýīl, the Indian. [Álī al-Qārī].

heavens and enters paradise and eats from its fruits and embraces Houris – every one of them is a kāfir and has belied the Prophet ﷺ, because he has informed us that he is "**the final prophet and there is no prophet after him**".He ﷺ has also informed us narrating from Revelation that he is the final prophet and that he has been sent for all mankind. The entire nation has unanimously agreed [*ijmāá*] that these statements[714] are literal and thus it should be understood [literally], without any metaphorical explanation or exception.

Obviously, there is no doubt in the kufr of all the aforementioned groups; absolutely, by ijmāá and by revealed proofs.[715]

Similarly, there is ijmāá on the takfīr of any person who rejects the text of the Qur'ān or takes exception to that Ĥadīth upon which there is unanimous agreement that it is absolutely authentic, and unanimously agreed that its meaning is literal; for instance, takfīr of Khawārij who do not accept stoning [of adulterers].[716]

Similarly, we make takfīr of a person who abstains from making takfīr of all those who follow religions other than Islām – or hesitates in considering them kāfir, or doubts that they are kāfir, or proclaims their religion to be valid; even if such a person professes Islām and believes in it; even if he has the belief that all religions are false except Islām, he is still a kāfir for saying that which he does not himself believe.

[714] Statements in the Qur'ān and Ĥadīth that proclaim RasūlAllāh ﷺ as *Khātam al-Nabiyyīn*.

[715] *dalīl samýī.*

[716] Whereas it is mentioned in Ĥadīth of *Muwaṭṭā* etc. [Qārī].

Appendix F

EXTRACT FROM ASH'BĀH: ON APOSTASY

Ashbāh wa'n Nażāyir of Imām Zaynuddīn ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Nujaym al-Ĥanafī [d.970 AH] is an important book on principles of fiqh in the Ĥanafī madh'hab organised in seven categories. C*ategory Two: Illustrations*; *The Book of War: Chapter on Apostasy*[717] comprises of rulings illustrating principles of fiqh.

1. If a person salutes a *dhimmi* out of reverence [to his faith], he has committed kufr. If a person tells a Magian[718] "My Master" with reverence, has committed kufr. [*Ṣalāt al-Żahīriyyah*].

2. In *Ṣughrā*: Kufr is a very grave charge; I will not consider a believer as a kāfir, if I can find a narration[719] that prevents me from making takfīr.[720]

3. The apostasy of an inebriated person is invalid; except in the case of a person who disrespects the Prophet ﷺ, and the blasphemer will be executed without pardon. [*Bazzāziyyah*].

4. The repentance of every kāfir is admissible in this world and the hereafter, except those infidels who blaspheme against our Prophet ﷺ or any other prophets; or if he insults the two shaykhs [Abū Bakr ؓ and Úmar ؓ][721] or one of them; or a sorcerer – even if it is a woman; or a zindīq if he is captured prior to his repentance. [*Yatīmah*]

5. Any Muslim who has become an apostate will be executed if he does not repent; however, women are not executed;[722] those who are Muslims as concomitants[723] or children; or a person who is forced to accept Islām[724] will not be executed.

6. A person whose Islām is proven by witnesses [one man and two women; or two men] and becomes an apostate will be executed.

7. The punishment for apostasy is execution, if the apostate does not revert to Islām. All his previous deeds will be [deemed] destroyed; however, when he reverts to Islām, he need not expiate [*qaḍā*] past deeds

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[717] Ibn Nujaym al-Ĥanafī, *Al-Ash'bāh wa'n Nażāyir,* 219. Notes are based on *Ghamz al-Úyūn al-Baṣāyir*, 2/189, commentary of *Ashbāh* by Aĥmed ibn Muĥammad al-Ĥamawī [d.1098 AH].

[718] Magian is mentioned as an example, it could be any kind of kāfir.

[719] That is, a juridical opinion which prevents me from doing takfīr, even if it is the opinion of non-Ĥanafī scholars.

[720] In Ghamz, these are listed as two statements.

[721] Even though the author attributes this to *Jawharah*, it is not found therein, in spite of examining commonly available copies. But we, Ĥanafīs accept the repentance of the blasphemer of prophets unlike Mālikīs and Ĥanbalīs; then why should the repentance of a slanderer of Shaykhayn be inadmissible? Rather, none among famous scholars has ever said so [Ĥamawī].

[722] That is, if a woman becomes an apostate, she will not be executed.

[723] For example, the minor whose parents became Muslims and thereafter, he becomes an adult and has not professed faith after puberty. If such a person becomes an apostate, he will not be executed; because apostasy is reverting from attesting Islām and here, there is no proof of Islām after puberty.

[724] Who became a Muslim by coercion.

except Ĥajj, similar to the original disbeliever who becomes a Muslim.[725] The ĥadīth an apostate narrates from others becomes invalid; it is forbidden for others to narrate from him after his apostasy [*Walwalijiyyah*].

The apostate's wife goes out of wedlock, his endowments become absolutely invalid. If he dies [a natural death as an apostate] or is executed for apostasy, he shall neither be buried in the graveyard of Muslims or the graveyard of his community.[726] He shall be shoved in a pit like a mangy cur – because an apostate is worse than the original kāfir.

8. Faith means to attest [and believe in] the veracity of the Prophet Muĥammad ﷺ concerning everything brought by him ﷺ; and is deemed Essential of Faith.

9. Kufr means to belie anything that Prophet Muĥammad ﷺ has brought and is deemed Essential of Faith.[727] Nobody among the People of Qiblah will be deemed kāfir unless they deny that which brought them into Islām in the first place.[728]

10. The summary of the opinions of Ĥanafī scholars is based on this [principle above] and there are things that are differed upon – but certainly, the fatwā [of kufr] is not given in any issue where scholars have differed upon.

11. Insulting Shaykhayn and cursing them is kufr; but if he elevates Álī over them, he is a heretic [*Khulāṣah*]. In *Manāqib* of Kardarī, it is said that anyone rejecting the caliphate of Abū Bakr or Úmar ﷺ, or hates them because of the Prophet's ﷺ love for them is a kāfir; however, if he only loves Álī more than them both, he can be excused.[729]

12. In *Tahdhīb*: A person shall become an apostate if he rejects whatever is obligatory to accept, or mocks Allāh táālā or the Qur'ān or any of the prophets.

13. The apostate shall be executed, even if he behaves like a Muslim – offers prayer in congregation, performs Ĥajj with *talbiyah*.[730]

14. If a person rejects [the charge of] apostasy, it is deemed his repentance. If a number of Muslims attest to his apostasy, and he denies it – he will not be prosecuted. This does not mean that righteous people who

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[725] He/she is not required to expiate obligatory actions like prayer and fasting.

[726] Suppose he converts to Christianity, *al-íyādhu billāh*, he will not be allowed burial in the Churchyard.

[727] Everything brought by the Prophet ﷺ is truth; but not everything that we know is incontrovertibly proven. For example, there are numerous sunnah which are proven by weak ĥadīth, or even an authentic sole-narrator ĥadīth could be interpreted in many ways. Not accepting such a sunnah would not mean that he has rejected the Prophet's ﷺ word. See Imām Faḍl al-Rasūl Badāyūni's explanation in the chapter on apostasy.

[728] That is the *shahādah* and the declaration of faith.

[729] Ĥamawī disagreed and said that this opinion is not consistent or reasonable.

[730] The pilgrim's chant: *Labbayk Allahumma Labbayk*! Here I am, my Lord! Here I am at your service.

bore witness are false – rather, his denial[731] is deemed repentance and reversion [*Fatĥ al-Qadīr*]. But you may object: Just a little earlier you have said that apostasy is proven by two upright witnesses; what is the use of that clause? My answer: Two upright witnesses are required to prove that he is an apostate; and denial [of the accused] is repentance – so that legal rulings can be established concerning an apostate, even if he repents; such as erasure of his past deeds, annulment of endowments, his wife going out of wedlock.

15. When it is said, "he will not be prosecuted" this refers to an apostate whose repentance is accepted, not about an apostate whose repentance is inadmissible, such as the blasphemer of the Prophet ﷺ or insulting the Shaykhayn [Abū Bakr and Úmar].

16. Scholars differed concerning the kufr of a person who believes that a Friend of Allāh can travel long distances in a very short span of time.[732]

17. If a person says: "I won't pray,"[733] we do not make takfīr unless he means to reject [the obligation].

18. It is not necessary for a person to know the name of the father of Sayyidunā Muĥammad ﷺ to profess faith; just the name of the Prophet ﷺ is sufficient.

19. If a person described the attributes of Allāh in front of his wife and she says: "I used to suppose that Allāh táālā is in the heavens," she has committed kufr.[734]

20. If a person says: "I am Pharoah" or "I am Lucifer," he will not be considered a kāfir, unless he means to say that his belief is similar to that of Pharaoh or Lucifer.[735]

21. Scholars debated the kufr of a person who said as an apology: "I used to be a kāfir, now I am Muslim."[736]

22. If someone tells another:[737] "you are a kāfir" and the person replies: "yes, I am a kāfir." The latter has become a kāfir.

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[731] Denial here works in case of an utterance; not in the case of people who write, publish and reprint blasphemies. In such cases, explicit disavowal of these past blasphemies and a renewal of faith and marriage is necessary.

[732] This used to be a contention in the past; but now with air travel – a person is in Makkah in the morning and in China or Africa by evening and the very premise – that it is not possible, is invalid.

[733] In *Ímādiyyah*: If a person says about the five obligatory prayers, 'I don't pray,' and he means to reject the command of Allāh, he is a kāfir. But if he is merely giving information [that he has this bad habit of not praying] he is not a kāfir.

[734] Ĥamawī:

> That is only if she said this knowing that it is kufr; but if she was ignorant, she will not become kāfir. Because the excuse of ignorance is admissible in some cases of takfīr, even though the general opinion is that of takfīr (in spite of the excuse of ignorance). Secondly, this saying itself is debatable whether it is kufr, because utmost it would attest a direction to Allāh táālā, and one who does so is a heretic, not an apostate. Even though this would imply a body, it is not necessary that the person attests a body – just because X implies Y, it does not mean X is Y. In *Sharĥ Shāfiyyah*: A slavegirl was brought to the Prophet ﷺ and her master wanted to manumit her as expiation. He ﷺ asked: "Where is Allāh?" and she pointed towards the sky; the Prophet ﷺ said: "Release her, she is a Muslim".

[735] *firáwn, iblīs*.

[736] This is about common expressions – even though it is wild. If one said to another as an apology, meaning I used to be in the wrong before, but now I see the truth.

[737] As illustration, the original uses the example of a woman. If a woman was told: 'you are kāfir...' Yet, it applies to all.

23. One who considers sodomy with his wife as permissible is a kāfir according to majority.[738]

24. If a person steps on the Qur'ān in derision he is a kāfir; and if a person makes fun of [religious] knowledge or satirises [religious] scholars, he is a kāfir.[739]

25. If a person rejects the basis of Witr or Sacrifice[740] is a kāfir. If he abandons worship disdainfully, he is a kāfir; but if he abandons prayer out of laziness or some other reason, he will not be ruled kāfir. [*Mujtabā*]

26. If a person claims Knowledge of Unseen,[741] he becomes a kāfir; so also, if he/she says: "I don't know Allāh táālā".[742]

27. Making fun of the call to prayer [*adhān*] is kufr; mocking the caller is not.

28. If a trader[743] says: Kāfirs and their countries [hostile to Muslims] are better than Muslims and Muslim countries, he will not be ruled kāfir, unless he means their religion is better.

29. If a person salutes [gives salām to] another and he says: "It is an enormity if I reply to your salutation," he will not be ruled kāfir.

30. If a person is told: "Say, there is no God except Allāh" and he replies: "I will not say so," he will not become a kāfir.[744]

31. If a person tells another: Do not be conceited, it will cause your downfall – because Mūsā ﷺ liked himself which caused him distress;[745] he will be asked to explain what he meant; if his explained meaning is one of kufr, he will be ruled a kāfir.

32. If a person says, "My wife is more beloved to me than Allāh táālā" and his intention is mundane love, then he will not become kāfir; but if means love as in reverence and worship, he is a kāfir.

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[738] In *Nawādir*, it is mentioned that Imām Muḥammad: Concerning a person who considers sodomy and intercourse with a woman during her menstrual periods as lawful – the correct position is that he is not a kāfir.

[739] If the person kicks in derision; but if he steps on it accidentally, unknowingly or in duress, he will not become a kāfir. Similarly, if he derides a scholar for his shortcomings, he will not become a kāfir – but if he is ridiculed because of his affiliation to Islamic knowledge, it is deemed mockery of religion, hence he will be deemed kāfir. Ḥamawī mentions a fatwā about an amputee without both hands who writes the Qur'ān with his toes and says he is not a kāfir because this is not done in derision.

[740] That is, if he rejects that there is no basis for *witr* or sacrifice [*uḍ'ḥiyyah*] he is a kāfir because it is proven by *tawātur*; however, if he does not accept the legal ruling that it is *wājib* [as in the Ḥanafī madh'hab] he is not.

[741] That is, absolute knowledge of unseen as mentioned by Imām Nawawī in his *Fatāwā*.

[742] That is, if he says it as an agnostic; but if he indicates ignorance about Allāh táālā while believing in Him, it is not kufr.

[743] Trader is mentioned to indicate that he must have travelled to lands of disbelievers and seen their customs and living conditions.

[744] Unless he means to reject that credo and belief in Allāh or monotheism, in which case there is no doubt of his kufr.

[745] This is difficult to translate and may sound absurd in English. The words used are *újb* and *halak* – if such words are used for prophets, with the intention of common usage which is disrespectful, the person becomes kāfir; but if he uses these words but does not intend the disrespectful meaning, he will not be a kāfir.

33. If a person worships an idol, he becomes a kāfir, regardless of what he professes in his heart.

34. Similarly, if one makes fun of the saying of the Prophet ﷺ; or exposes his privates [when the Ĥadīth is mentioned], he becomes a kāfir.

35. Similarly, if he makes the image of Sayyidunā Ýīsā ﷺ to worship him, he becomes a kāfir.

36. So also if he makes an idol [for worship] he becomes a kāfir.

37. Similarly, disrespecting the Qur'ān or mosques or any such thing which is revered in Islām, is kufr.

38. Similarly using unclean things in places where it is forbidden to use,[746] if he does it by way of derision, he becomes a kāfir.

39. If a person wears the *zunnār* for Jews or Christians, regardless whether he enters their places of worship or not, he becomes a kāfir.[747] If he says, I did so to make fun of them, he will be believed.

40. If anyone doubts in the veracity and truth of Prophet ﷺ, or insults him, or denigrates him, or belittles him or uses a diminutive to describe him ﷺ, such a person is a kāfir.[748]

41. If one uses a diminutive to describe a mosque, scholars have differed whether he is a kāfir; but the correct position is, that he is not a kāfir.[749]

42. Similarly, if one wishes that Allāh táālā should not have sent the Prophet ﷺ, if he says this without enmity [he will not be a kāfir].

43. If one deems a licentious person as a prophet, he becomes a kāfir; because such things are unbecoming of a prophet.[750]

44. If a person says that prophets have not made errors during or prior to their prophethood, he becomes a kāfir because it is rejection of Qur'ānic verses.[751]

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[746] For example, blood, alcohol and urine are impure [*najāsah*] and if one uses these to write the Qur'ān, it is Ĥarām if it is done as novelty etc; but if it is done derisively or challenging religious laws, it is kufr.

[747] *Zunnār*: girdle or a belt. If a Muslim would wear them, it is as if he is telling others: 'I am a Jew or Christian,' which is kufr; or if he is trying to ridicule Islām. hence the comment – regardless whether he enters a synagogue or a church.

[748] The word used here is *taṣ'ghīr*. Ĥamawī says: That is if one uses the diminutive form of the Prophet's ﷺ name or his blessed body, the person becomes a kāfir instantly. In *Fatāwā Żahīriyyah*, if a person says about the hair of the Prophet ﷺ as a hairlet [diminutive] he becomes a kāfir if his intention is to denigrate; another group of scholars disagreed and said sometimes diminutives are used to describe a thing or person with respect and reverence, as a figure of speech.

[749] This is because of the Ĥadīth narrated by Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said: 'Do not call a mosque or the copy of the Qur'ān with their dimunitive forms' [that is, *masjid* as a *musayjid* and *muṣ'ĥaf* as a *muṣayĥaf*].

[750] That is, prophets are pure and immaculate – and this person has denigrated the exalted station of prophethood.

[751] Ĥamawī:

> This is problematic, because Qāđī Íyāđ and others have said that prophets are divinely protected from sin; from both small sins and enormities; both prior to and after their prophethood; both unknowingly and deliberately. Proofs for these are

45. If a person attributes immorality or indecency to prophets, such as 'desire or intention to commit adultery' in the case of Sayyidunā Yūsuf ﷺ, the person becomes kāfir because it is derogatory to prophets; though some have said, that he doesn't become a kāfir [in certain circumstances].[752]

46. If a person does not know [or acknowledge] that Sayyidunā Muĥammad ﷺ is the last of all prophets, such a person is [certainly] not a Muslim because this tenet is an Essential of Faith.[753]

found in abundance, in books of Kalām. Indeed, if the sentence means kufr of such a person [who says prophets did not sin]; this is about common folk who only know the Qur'ān text and its literal meaning; but if it is a person who knows that such words are not to be taken literally and requires interpretation, such a person will not be ruled kāfir. I say, this opinion requires further clarification because the preferred ruling is that ignorance is acceptable in the topic of *ikfār-takfīr* and Allāh táālā guides on the path of righteousness.

Someone answered it partially and said: This statement concerns a person who mentions the verse [Sūrah ŢāHā, 20:121]:

وَعَصَىٰٓ ءَادَمُ رَبَّهُۥ فَغَوَىٰ

and says, 'they did not make any errors that are proven.' Which would necessitate rejection of this verse; but if any person takes this verse to mean an enormous sin [*kabīrah*] he is a kāfir. I say: Belying or rejection of the verse is only in the case of an ordinary person who does not know anything else other than Qur'ān verses. We have said earlier that ignorance is an admissible excuse in *takfīr* and Allāh táālā alone Knows the manifest and the hidden; but this answer is incomplete. It appears to me that this is a spurious addition in our madh'hab – because it is unimaginable that anyone in our madh'hab would take this route!

It is also said that due to copyists mistake, a ***mīm*** has been erased in this sentence '*lam yúşamū*' became '*lam yáşu*.' That is, "If a person believes that prophets are not divinely protected from sin – prior and after their prophethood - becomes a kāfir" because such a statement contradicts scriptural texts and by elision of *mīm,* it means the exact opposite. لم يعصوا – لم يعصموا. Detailed proofs for this position is found in books of Kalām, and I have written a book on this topic titled: *It'ĥāf al-Adhkiyā bi Taĥrīri Mas-alati Işmah al- Anbiyā'a*. Allāh táālā guides towards the straight path.

[752] The correct position is that he is a kāfir; if a person assumed that it was possible prior to prophethood – or mentions the Qur'ānic verse and takes its literal meaning. Those who disagreed were being extra careful in takfīr. This certainly does not mean that anyone can say anything about prophets and cite this opinion. This opinion is restricted to such words mentioned in the Qur'ān and Ĥadīth, and in no manner permitted in other languages.

[753] And ignorance is not an admissible excuse to avoid takfīr in the case of Essentials of Faith.

Appendix G

EXTRACT FROM SHIFĀ: THE SEVEN CASES

Qāđī Íyāđ explains seven cases – statements or actions considered as blasphemy. Some illustrations of these concern explicit and intentional insults and some others are implied and unintentional. Qāđī Íyāđ mentions rulings in all these cases.[754]

The Qāđī says: [**The First Case**:] We have mentioned earlier that whosoever intentionally disrespects or disparages him in whatever manner – regardless of whether such description is possible or impossible[755] – such a person is executed. This is a clear-cut case and there is no reason for confusion nor anything problematic about it.

The Second Case: is similar to the previous one in its wording and explicitness; however, the utterer does not say it with the intention of insulting or disparaging the Prophet ﷺ, nor does he believe in such things. But he has [nevertheless] uttered blasphemies – words of kufr:

- that criticise him or insult him or belie him;
- or attribute things to him which are forbidden to say about him or negate something which is obligatory for him;
- or attributes a flaw or fault to him – such as accusing him of commiting a major sin or flattery or cajolery when he preached to others or [when he] delivered the message, or in his adjudication between disputing parties;
- or says things that diminish the lofty rank Allāh táālā has bestowed upon him, or [disparages] his noble lineage or [degrades] the extensiveness of his knowledge or his austerity;
- or if a person denies things informed by him, when such reports are well-known and have reached the level of *tawātur*, [if such denial is in the form of] seeking to reject his opinion;
- or if a person talks about him in a rude and brusque manner, or speaks about him in vulgar and uncouth words or any other form of abusive speech;

Even if the person proves that he has not deliberately said any of this to deride him ﷺ; or intended to insult or disparage him ﷺ – whether it was ignorance that made him say such things or because he was discontented or disgruntled, or he was inebriated, or he blurted it out without thinking or it slipped from his tongue, or because of haughtiness or impudence, or impetuousity and recklessness; in all such cases, the ruling is the same as in the first case – that is, execution without further deliberation or any hesitation, because the excuse of ignorance [in such cases] which cause apostasy is inadmissible, nor the excuse of slip of the tongue, nor any other excuse which I have mentioned above as long as the person is sane and has not lost his reason. Except a person in duress, who utters such things due to coercion – as long as faith is undisturbed in his heart. It is therefore, that the Andalusian scholars decreed against Ibn Ĥātim when he repudiated the zuhd of RasūlAllāh ﷺ, as

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[754] *Kitāb al-Shifā*, Volume Two: Part Four, Chapter Two. p364.

[755] Khafājī: things which are possible such as human errors and things which are impossible by Law [*mumtaniý sharán*] such as falsehood – because being always truthful is his miracle.

mentioned earlier. Muĥammad ibn Saĥnūn said concerning the blasphemy committed by prisoners,[756] that they should be executed – except in the case of such prisoners who became Christians[757] or those who were compelled to utter blasphemies.

Abū Muĥammad ibn Abī Zayd[758] said that no one will be spared nor any excuse citing slip of the tongue will be admissible in such cases [of blasphemy]. Similarly, Abu'l Ĥasan al-Qābisī issued a fatwā that whoever insulted the Prophet ﷺ even in a state of intoxication shall be executed, because it appears that the person must have held such beliefs in soberness and probably says such things when he is not drunk – and this is statutory punishment [*ĥadd*] which is not excusable, like the case of [unjust] accusation of adultery or murder or other *ĥadd* punishments as he is responsible for this himself. Because when a person knowingly [and of his own free choice] gets drunk, in full knowledge that he may commit a crime, is the same as a person who commits a crime intentionally. Based on this, we consider valid, the divorce or manumission [by a drunk] and punishment in case of homicide [qiṣāṣ] and other punishments.

One cannot pose an objection by citing the case of Sayyidunā Ĥamzah ؓ when he said addressing the Prophet ﷺ, "You are all the slaves of my father." The Prophet ﷺ recognised that he was inebriated and left him [without reprimanding him]. This was because wine was not forbidden at that time, and therefore a crime committed under the influence of alcohol was not a sin; and whatever said [in such a state] was pardonable – similar to a person talking in his sleep or in a state of reduced consciousness while using certain permissible medications.[759]

The Third Case: When a person intends to belie his words[760] and seeks to falsify his message or rejects his prophethood or messengership[761] or denies his existence or disbelieves in him – does such a person transfer to another religion by these statements or not? [The answer is:] such a person is [very much] an apostate by ijmāá and he shall be executed. The statement of such a person is analysed, and if statement is explicit and openly said, he is judged similar to an apostate. Scholars have debated whether his repentance is requisitioned; [some have accepted it] and according to the second opinion, this person will not be spared the death penalty, even if he repents, because of [his violating] the right of RasūlAllāh ﷺ; this is in case he utters something which is disparaging such as an accusation of lying etc.

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[756] According to Khafājī, those imprisoned by non-Muslims in hostile lands or incarcerated by disbelievers, such as Muslims in Guantanamo Bay or Abū Ghraib in Iraq or Israeli jails in our times.

[757] That is, if they commit blasphemy after becoming apostates; they will be asked to repent and let off if they repent, opposed to a Muslim who commits blasphemy – who is executed without repentance [according to Malikis]. In other versions of *Shifā* the sentence reads: "except where the prisoner is compelled to utter blasphemy and his reluctance to do it as well as faith being firm in his heart is known".

[758] Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī [310-386 AH] famous Mālikī jurist known for his *Epistle*.

[759] That which may cause drowsiness – in Qāđī Íyāđ's time, this would be some sort of a mild narcotic, like small quantities of opium; and in our time many drugs – painkillers and antibiotics induce sleep, drowsiness and carry a warning against driving when using such medications.

[760] Khafājī: If a person knowingly accuses him ﷺ of telling a lie or seeks to belie him.

[761] Refuses to believe that he ﷺ was a prophet and a messenger of Allāh. Even though this is a form of disrespect, it is different than other kinds of insult – like Jews and Christians do – it will not be considered as blasphemy in our madh'hab as it shall be explained presently.

If he keeps such things clandestine and says them in private, he is similar to a zindīq – and will not be spared execution according to Mālikī scholars as I shall explain later; Abū Ĥanīfah and his students said that whosoever distances himself from Sayyidunā Muĥammad ﷺ or belies him ﷺ is an apostate and his blood is no more immune[762] except if he reverts. Ibn al-Qāsim said, if a Muslim says that Sayyidunā Muĥammad ﷺ is not a Prophet or that he was not sent [by Allāh táālā] as a Messenger or the Qur'ān was not revealed to him or any such slander, shall be executed. Any Muslim who rejects or disbelieves in RasūlAllāh ﷺ is [akin to] an apostate[763] and similarly, one who publicly belies the Prophet ﷺ is dealt with as an apostate and is requisitioned to repent.

Similarly, if one declares himself to be a prophet and claims that he receives revelation [he is an apostate and will be asked to revert and repent] as said by Saĥnūn.[764] Ibn al-Qāsim said regardless of whether he makes this claim discreetly or proclaims it openly. Aṣbagh said: Such a person is an apostate as he has disbelieved in the book of Allāh táālā and attributed a lie to Him.[765]

Ash-hab said concerning a Jew who purports to be a prophet and claims that he was given a message [by revelation to give] to the people or if he tells [Muslims]: "There shall be a prophet after your Prophet," he shall be asked to repent if he says such things in public – if he repents, he is spared or else executed. This is because he has belied the Prophet ﷺ when he said: "There is no prophet after me" and has lied and falsely alleged that Allāh táālā has made him a prophet or a messenger.

Muĥammad ibn Saĥnūn said: 'Anyone who doubts a single letter[766] that Sayyidunā Muĥammad ﷺ has brought from Allāh ta'álā, is an obstinate kāfir.' And he said: 'The punishment for whoever belies the Prophet ﷺ, according to [the agreement of] our nation is that he shall be executed.' Saĥnūn's student Aĥmad ibn Abī Sulaymān said: 'Whoever says that the Prophet ﷺ was black shall be executed because the Prophet ﷺ did not have a dark complexion.' Abū Úthmān al-Ĥaddād said similarly: 'If one says that the Prophet ﷺ passed away [young] even before he had facial hair, or that he lived in Tahert[767] or denies that the Prophet ﷺ did not live in Tihāmah[768] – such a denier will be executed as he rejects the Prophet's well-known attributes. Ĥabīb ibn Rabīý said, 'Altering his ﷺ attributes [deliberately] and describing him unlike his appearance; or denying his location[769] is kufr; if a person says such things openly, he is an apostate and will be requisitioned to repent; and

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[762] That is, he will be executed.

[763] There is no doubt that he is an apostate; but wherever the phrase 'akin to an apostate' 'similar to an apostate' is used, it is meant to indicate the ruling – and the difference between an apostate, and a blaspheming apostate.

[764] Khafājī suggests that it is Saĥnūn's opinion.

[765] Khafājī: *Firyah* here means attributing a lie to Allāh táālā that He has given the claimant revelation.

[766] Khafājī: That which is reported that Ábdullāh ibn Masúūd ﷺ denied the last two chapters of the Qur'ān [*muáwwidhatayn*] is incorrect and is commonly agreed by scholars as false. Suppose, hypothetically the report is correct, even then it would only mean that an ijmāá was not established at that time – but after the ijmāá is established, anyone who denies it is an apostate as Muĥammad ibn Saĥnūn is cited later in the book [*Shifā*].

[767] Tahart, Tiaret or Tahert is a town in Algeria and is close to Tlemcen [Tilimisān] and in the time of the Prophet ﷺ it used to be an Arab settlement in Berber Northern Africa.

[768] Tihāmah is the Red Sea coastal plain of Arabia, and the northern part where Jeddah, Makkah etc., are located is known as Tihāmah al-Ĥijāz.

[769] That he lived in Makkah and Madīnah.

if he mentions this in private, he is considered a *zindīq* and shall be executed without any requisition for repentance.

The Fourth Case: When someone says something generic or cryptic; or ambiguous words which could either refer to the Prophet ﷺ or to someone else. Or if the meaning of what he said could be either valid or invalid [depending on the interpretation] and therefore merits further investigation, this becomes a perplexing topic such that mujtahid scholars find it debatable and hence the conflicting opinions and adherent-scholars[770] are reluctant to take a stand and excuse themselves by following the opinion of mujtahid scholars. Consequently, some are spared and some go to the gallows, depending on the outcome of the prosecution. Such [scholars and judges] who focused on defending the honour of the Prophet ﷺ were bold in handing the death penalty; and those who focused on the gravity of shedding a Muslim's blood withheld from handing strict sentences due to ambiguity of such statements.[771]

[For example] our imāms differed in the case of a person who was angered by an adversary who told him: 'Send blessings on the Prophet ﷺ' and the person blurted: 'May Allāh never bless the person who prayed for blessings upon him ﷺ'. Saĥnūn was asked about this person whether he had insulted the Prophet ﷺ or angels [because they] send blessings upon him ﷺ; and he replied 'No, if he has said it in anger without thinking about the consequences and did not intend to insult Allāh's Messenger ﷺ.' Abū Is'ĥāq al-Barqī and Aṣbagh ibn al-Faraj said that he will not be executed because he has insulted others[772] and not the Prophet ﷺ. This is similar to Saĥnūn's opinion because he did not excuse the person on account of anger[773] in blasphemy of the Prophet ﷺ, but because the statement was ambiguous requiring clarification – and he did not have sufficient corroborative evidence for establishing blasphemy of the Prophet ﷺ or derision of angels; nor did he know the complete speech which could provide the proper context of such a statement; rather, the situation indicates that the person's ire was directed at the other man.

This is consistent with the reasoning of both his companions [mentioned earlier]. However, the judge Ĥārith ibn Miskīn and others opined that in such cases, the utterer will be executed. Abu'l Ĥasan al-Qābisī was reluctant to order the execution of a person who said: "Every innkeeper is a pimp,[774] even if he is a prophet," and he ordered the person to be imprisoned and reprimanded until he understood the implication of his utterance. Such a person is asked to clarify whether he meant innkeepers of our time – and since it is known fact that there is no prophet in our time, his sentence is lighter. However, the apparent meaning of this statement is generic – that includes innkeepers in the past as well as the present, and there are among prophets and messengers in the past who were wealthy.[775] The blood of a Muslim is precious and we cannot hasten unless the case is amply clear; if a problematic statement is open for interpretation, it is essential to analyse it at length and seek further clarification.

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[770] *muqallid.*

[771] Since the statement was ambiguous, the latter group of scholars were careful and chose to err on the side of caution.

[772] His statement refers to the other man with whom he has the argument, not the Prophet ﷺ himself.

[773] Khafājī: blasphemy of the Prophet ﷺ is inexcusable, even if one does it in anger.

[774] *qarunān*, a cuckold or a person who brings men to his own wife or his daughters or sisters etc. [Khafājī 6/225]

[775] Thus insinuating against prophets and therefore, the ruling would be more severe. Khafājī says that 'innkeeper' is a metaphor for a wealthy trader.

Concerning a person who said: "May Allāh damn the Arabs; may Allāh damn the Children of Israel; may Allāh damn the children of Ādam" and he did not intend prophets among them – rather his intention was the oppressors and tyrants among them; Abū Muĥammad ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī is reported to have ruled for reprimanding and disciplining such a person – and punish as much is permissible for the Sultan.[776] Similarly he issued a fatwā concerning the person who said: 'May Allāh táālā damn the person[777] who forbade intoxicants' and says 'I don't know who forbade it.' Or if a person curses the ĥadīth: 'The local [trader] cannot sell to the bedouin.'[778] If such a person is ignorant of the ĥadīth, he will be reprimanded severely because on the outward, this person did not intend to blaspheme against Allāh táālā or His Messenger ﷺ; rather, he referred to other common men who forbade it. Similar to this is the speech of foolish masses; [such as a person] who abuses another and says: 'O son of a thousand pigs' or 'a hundred dogs' – because undoubtedly in such a large number of forefathers, there might be prophets – and quite probably this figure may end up with Sayyidunā Ādam ﷺ. It is necessary to reprimand such a person and explain the stupidity of his utterance; however, if it is known [credibly] that he indeed included the prophets in the forefathers, then he shall be executed. Similarly, if a person tells a Hāshimi:[779] 'may Allāh táālā damn the children of Hāshim' the scope for interpretation becomes very narrow. If the person claims that: 'I intended the tyrants among them' or if a person says similar things to a descendant of the Prophet ﷺ and in full knowledge that he is the descendant of the Prophet ﷺ or says ugly things about his forefathers or ancestry or his children; because it is difficult to justify an exclusion of the Prophet ﷺ while making such a generalisation. I have seen the fatwā of Abū Mūsā ibn Manās where he ordered the execution, if proven, of a person who told another: 'May Allāh damn you [and your forefathers] until Ādam ﷺ'.

I say:[780] our masters have differed on the issue of a person who bore witness and then said: 'Do you accuse me of [false witness]?' The other person replied: 'Even prophets have been slandered and you are of a lesser consequence.' Our shaykh Abū Is'ĥāq ibn Jaáfar ruled for his execution owing to the odiousness of the words he has used; but Qāđī Abū Muĥammad ibn Manşūr refrained from executing him because those words can be interpreted according to him – that is, the second person could be mentioning a historical fact of how the infidels slandered prophets; the Qāđī of Cordova Abū Ábdullāh ibn al-Ĥajjāj ruled similarly. However, the judgement of Qāđī Abū Muĥammad was far more stricter and he ordered the person to be chained and jailed and made him to swear an oath that he had been untruthful; and then released him.[781]

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[776] But not the death penalty, owing to the vagueness in the case.

[777] Khafājī: At the outset, this is apostasy and earns the death penalty, because intoxicants were forbidden by the lawmaker; that is, the Prophet ﷺ.

[778] This is the part of a famous ĥadīth recorded in many books including the two Ṣaĥīĥs: *nahā RasūlAllāh ﷺ án yabīá ĥāđirun li-baād* and *wa lā baý ĥāđirun li-baād* with slight variations [*Bukhārī*, 2158-2163]. In other narrations, it is not absolute and has a qualifier: he cannot sell without an agent as a go-between. It is an extensively discussed issue and various explanations have been offered; Ibn Ĥajar mentions that the Ĥanafīs qualified this as sale in times of duress and inflation where the local trader may rip off the unknowing bedouin (or a non-local buyer) who is in need of that particular item; whereas Imām Mālik said that it is specific for bedouins and does not include other rural areas, because they are aware of prices and the state of trade [*Fat'ĥ al-Bārī*, #2158, 5/632].

[779] The Muslim progeny of Hāshim, the great-grandfather of RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

[780] In the text: "The Qāđī – may Allāh táālā give him guidance and success says"

[781] Qārī: This is not about the original case of witness [*shuhūd*] but related to his unjust accusation of prophets.

I witnessed [a case dealt by] Qāđī Abū Ábdullāh ibn Ýīsā in his tenure about a person who abused another person named Muĥammad, and then kicked a dog and said: 'Stand up O Muĥammad.' The person who said this denied it, but a number of people bore witness that he certainly said so; the Qāđī ordered the person to be jailed and investigated whether this person spent time in the company of agnostics and dhimmis. When it was found that the person was not inimical to Islām per se, the Qāđī had him lashed and then released him.

The Fifth Case: If a person does not intend to denigrate the Prophet ﷺ, nor disparages him or insults him, but his speech is indicative of it, when he mentions certain attributes of the Prophet ﷺ, or certain situation that are permissible for the Prophet ﷺ in mundane matters; the person mentions these by way of analogy, or to exonerate his own self or others, or by way of comparison with the Prophet ﷺ or he encounters an embarrasing situation;[782] he does not mention these as historical facts or an example to follow; but rather to elevate himself or others by way of positing similitude[783] lacking respect due to the Prophet ﷺ or by way of small talk or trying to be novel. For example, when a person says:

- So what if bad things are said about me, people have said bad things about the Prophet ﷺ
- What is [unusual] if I am belied; even prophets have been belied;
- What is [unusual] if I commit a sin? Even prophets have sinned;
- How can I be safe from the tongues of men when prophets and messengers were not safe from them;
- I have been patient similar to the patience of the Prominent Messengers;[784] or as patient as Ayyūb;
- The Prophet ﷺ was more patient and forbearing with his enemies more than I had to bear;

Like the poet Mutanabbi[785] has said:

I am among this nation, may Allāh táālā set them right
As unwelcome as Salih was among his community

Similar is the poetry of the profligate and reckless folk, like Maárrī[786] has said:

You are like Mūsā whom the daughter of Shuáyb came to,
Except there is no beggar among either of you[787]

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[782] Clearly, such a person does not mention the trials of the Prophet ﷺ as an example to follow, but mentions it to justify his position or rationalise the situation or to ward off criticism by citing the Prophet's ﷺ name.

[783] Khafājī exclaims: Comparison with him ﷺ? Where is Pleiades, and where is dust of the earth? *ayn al-thurayya wa ayn al-tharā.*

[784] *ulu'l ázm.*

[785] Abū Tayyib al-Júfī [303-345 AH] famous poet and literary figure; at one time, he claimed to be a prophet – and hence the sobriquet 'mutanabbī.' He was arrested and he repented and reverted to Islām and confined himself to composing poetry; much later he was killed on his way to Baghdad.

[786] Aĥmed ibn Ábdullāh Abu'l Álā'a al-Maárrī [d. 449 AH] was a famous literary figure and poet; blind from birth and accused of zandaqah; it is said that he was inclined towards the religion of Brahmins.

[787] Here he alludes to the verse where Sayyidunā Mūsā ﷺ says in gratitude to the Lord Almighty: 'My Lord, truly, I am in need of the good sustenance you give me.' [Sūrah al-Qaşaş 28:24].

The second line is worse and it is an explicit insult of the Prophet Mūsā ﷺ because of [the poet's] elevating a non-prophet over him. Similarly, he has said:

If Revelation had not ceased with Muĥammad ﷺ
We would say: Muĥammad[788] is akin to his father[789]
He is similar to him ﷺ in superiority, except that
Jibrīl did not come to him with Revelation

The first part of the second line is the worst because he compares a non-prophet with the Prophet in superiority; and the following part can possibly render two meanings;[790] the first is that it diminishes the state of the person being praised in this distich, and the second is his being free of this attribute, which is worse.[791] Similar is the saying of another:[792]

When the Standards were raised
They fluttered vigorously amidst the wings of Jibrīl[793]

Another contemporary[794] has said:

He fled from paradise and dwelt in our neighbourhood
May Allāh give peace to the heart of Riđwān[795]

Ĥassān al-Maşīşī, an Andalusian poet said about Muĥammad ibn Ábbād al-Mútamid and his minister Abū Bakr ibn Zaydūn:

As if Abū Bakr is Abū Bakr,
Ĥassān is Ĥassān and you are Muĥammad[796]

Even though it is burdensome for us to narrate such things, we have mentioned many examples only to illustrate the laxity and brazenness of ignorant people and the recklessness with which they indulge in them, considering such a grave issue as a trifling matter. They are ignorant of the dire consequences of such utterances – they deem it insignificant but near Allāh táālā it is enormous. Particularly in the speech of poets,

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[788] Khafājī mentions that he was a descendant of RasūlAllāh ﷺ; Qārī says that it was Muĥammad ibn Rashīd al-Ábbāsī.

[789] By father, he refers to RasūlAllāh ﷺ, which according to Tilmisānī is kufr as it contradicts verse 40 of Sūrah Aĥzāb.

[790] Qārī and Khafājī both note that both possibilities are kufr.

[791] **First Meaning**: 'Muĥammad [the ruler Maárrī is praising] would be almost like him, except that he does not have *waĥy*' [that is he lacks this attribute and hence is imperfect]. **Second Meaning**: 'Muĥammad [the ruler of Maárrī's time] is almost like him, and he does not even have Waĥy [the attribute of Waĥy is discounted as inconsequential].

[792] Khafājī: It is from the ode of the poet Zayd ibn Ábd al-Raĥmān ibn Máānā al-Asyūfī al-Maghribi.

[793] Jibrīn is a variant of Jibrīl; Qārī says that the poet has denigrated the Archangel, and Khafājī says that it might not be disrespectful after all if the standards are considered as those from Jihad.

[794] Contemporary of Qāđī Íyāđ.

[795] Rizwān in Persian/Urdu, guards the door of paradise. Qārī says that 'Riđwān' is the correct pronunciation [*Sharĥ Shifā* 2/543].

[796] Here the imbecile compares the vizier to the companion Abū Bakr ﷺ, himself to the Prophet's poet Ĥassān ﷺ and the ruler to the Prophet ﷺ. We seek Allāh's refuge from such depravity.

and the worst of them are Ibn Hāniy al-Andalusi and Ibn Sulaymān al-Maárrī – much of their poetry falls into the disparaging variety and disrespect and explicit kufr which we have refuted earlier. The reason I have mentioned them here is to provide illustrations for this [fifth] case. Even though none of these lines – not just the ones of Maárrī – were intended to disparage prophets or angels by those who uttered them, nevertheless they have not been mindful of the lofty station of prophetood nor the eminence of messengership; nor respected the Chosen One or regarded his honour ﷺ; rather he compared lesser ones to him ﷺ for glory[797] and to enliven and enthrall the congregation, by using his name; he, whom Allāh táālā has honoured, elevated his rank and made it obligatory to respect him – such that Allah forbade speaking loudly in his presence.

Such a person [who utters these things], even though he escapes the death penalty, still deserves to be reprimanded and imprisoned – and the punishment given to him will be according to the severity of his speech and the ugliness of its implication, whether such things are frequent occurrences with him or whether it was an aberration, whether the context of his utterance can be interpreted favourably and whether he is remorseful about it. Our elders have firmly rejected such things, like [Hārūn] Rashīd refuted Abū Nuwās' lines:

> ***If anything from the sorcery of the Pharoah remains with you,***
> ***Then verily, [know that] the Staff of Mūsā is in these fecund hands!***[798]

Rashīd said: "O son of an uncouth hag! Do you mock the staff of Mūsā ﷺ?' And he ordered him to be kicked out of the army that very night. Among such verses criticised as either kufr or approaching kufr is one mentioned by Qutaybī where [Abū Nuwās] says praising Muĥammad al-Amīn and compares him with the Prophet ﷺ:[799]

> ***The two Aĥmads resemble each other so much***
> ***In appearance and in character, like [two] similar shoe laces.***[800]

Another criticised distich [of Abū Nuwās] is:

> ***How can you remain far from [attaining what you] hope***
> ***When the Messenger of Allāh belongs to his clan***[801]

The right of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his esteem is to mention others in relation to him; not to mention the Messenger of Allāh in relation with others. We have mentioned the legal ruling in such cases and the imām of our madh'hab, Mālik ibn Anas ﷺ and his companions have ruled likewise. In *Nawādir*, through the report of Ibn Abī Maryam about a man who was taunted by another for his poverty and he said: 'Do you taunt me

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[797] Expecting it from the ruler whom he praised thus.

[798] Khafājī: Abū Nuwās refers to Hārūn Rashīd, Commander of the Faithful. In 2012, Ṭāhir Jhangvi of *Minhajul Quran* used a similar analogy in Hyderabad, India. Referring to a local speechmaker named Kazim Pasha, he said: "...his Staff of Mūsā is sufficient and will take account of such things.." Unfortunately, there was no Rashīd to rebuke this impostor.

[799] Shumunnī: He is the son of [Hārūn] Rashīd ibn al-Mahdī.

[800] Qārī: This is explicit kufr and impossible to interpret favourably, except if he claims that by Aĥmed he meant someone else other than the Prophet ﷺ. Instead of two'Muhammads,' he said two 'Ahmeds' to maintain the meter.

[801] Qārī says that 'nafar' as in servant is modern usage, and here it is meant as clan. Instead of saying: 'This Amir belongs to the family of RasūlAllāh ﷺ' he does it in reverse thereby disrespecting the Prophet.

for being poor? The Prophet ﷺ has tended sheep.'[802] Mālik said: 'This person has mentioned the Prophet's case in an unsuitable manner, he should be reprimanded.' He also said: 'If those who commit sins are rebuked, they should not say "Prophets have commited errors prior to us."' Úmar ibn Ábd al-Ázīz told a person: 'Find me a scribe whose father is an Arab,' His scribe said: 'The Prophet's ﷺ father was a disbeliever.' Úmar said: 'Is this an example to cite?' and he dismissed him and told him: 'Don't you ever write for me'.[803]

Saĥnūn disliked the practice of saying the blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ when one encounters something which surprises him; and that it should be said only with the intention of attaining reward and to honour the Prophet ﷺ, as Allāh táālā has commanded us to do. Qābisī was asked about someone who told an ugly person that his face was like that of Nakīr, and to another scowling person that his face looked like angry Mālik.[804] Munkar and Nakīr are two inquisitor angels who question the dead in their graves. This could either mean that the person is frightening in looks like Nakir or that he hates the person and degrades him; the latter is more severe and could be insulting or degrading to an angel.

Yet, this is not explicitly disparaging or degrading an angel because he is insulting the person that he has addressed; such a person should be reprimanded, punished by lashing him and given a prison sentence. Similar is the case about the person who used the example of the angel Mālik, that is he did not intend to insult the angel – and if he did, he would receive the death penalty.

A young man, known for his piety and righteousness was saying something and another person rebuked him: 'Shut up, you are an illiterate.' The young man said: 'Was the Prophet not among those who are not read?'[805] People rejected this statement and made takfīr of the young man, which pained him and he was genuinely remorseful and penitent. Abu'l Ĥasan [al-Qābisi] said: 'Making takfīr of this person is incorrect; however, he has made an error in his analogy. The Prophet having not learned to read and write[806] is a miracle, but such an attribute is a flaw for the young man; and it is out of ignorance that he has used the example of the Prophet ﷺ to justify his own self. However, if he repents and does istighfār and is ashamed of his deed, he shall be acquitted because his statement is not as serious as to obligate the death penalty.

Another such issue was raised to our shaykh, Abū Muĥammad Manşūr, by the judges of Andalus about a person who told another who degraded him: "You degrade me for my flaws? All humans, even the Prophet ﷺ is not free from imperfection." Our shaykh gave him a lengthy and rigorous prison sentence, but some other judges of Andalus ruled for the death penalty.

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[802] Qārī: "The Prophet ﷺ did not tend to sheep as an occupation or grazed other people's sheep for pay; he did it of his own accord [and as mercy to animals] this was not disreputable in the community." However, in Bukhārī the word Qarārīţ/Qīrāţ is mentioned and debated whether it is the name of a place or whether it is a sum of money. See *Fat'ĥ al-Bārī*, #2262.

[803] Khafājī says that it is implicit proof that the parents of the Prophet ﷺ were Muslim.

[804] Mālik the Angry is the guardian of hell.

[805] The word used in Arabic is *ummī* which means illiterate when referring to common people; but describes one who has not learned to read and write from others in case of the Prophet ﷺ. Haytami says that it is derived from the word ***umm*** or mother; that is, the person is as unlettered as a newborn; or it is derived from ***ummah***, the community, because the Arabs were mostly illiterates – like it is said in the ĥadīth reported in both *Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, 'We are an unlettered nation; we neither make calculations nor do we write.' [*Al-Úmdah fī Sharĥ Al-Burdah*].

[806] Yet, he has brought such knowledge and wisdom that is greater than that of all creation put together – taught by Allāh táālā and no one else; *kafāka bi'l ílmi fi'l ummiyi mújizatan* :: *fi'l jāhiliyyati wa't ta'dībī fi'l yutumi.*

The Sixth Case: When one cites or reports blasphemies of others. The context of the citation, his actual words and situation will be taken into account for the ruling and it varies accordingly in four possible categories:

1. Obligatory / Wājib
2. Preferrable / Nadb
3. Disliked / Makrūh
4. Forbidden / Ĥarām

If a person mentions them in his testimony against a blasphemer and to inform others, and to reject and refute such speech; and to make it known to the public so that they abhor the blasphemer and criticise him – then such a narration is required and whoever does this is praiseworthy; similarly, if he mentions such things in a book or in a gathering to refute and quash such blasphemies or to issue a fatwā related to such utterances. This is obligatory[807] or recommended for him depending on the situation and the state of the person who narrates and the one about whom such a narration is made.

If the person who uttered [such blasphemies] is a person known to be a scholar or a teacher, [a shaykh or a muftī], or a Ĥadīth scholar and narrator, or a person in authority[808] or known to be a reliable witness or a well-known jurist – then it is obligatory for whosoever hears [such a thing from him] to expose him and make the public aware of what has been heard from him – and to make people dislike such a person, to bear witness against such a person and what he has said; it is obligatory for scholars and leaders in the Muslim community to repudiate such a person and clearly communicate the kufr of this person and the monstrosity of his ugly speech so that Muslims are safeguarded from the evil of such a person – and the right of the Leader of Messengers ﷺ is well established. Similarly, if that person [who has uttered a blasphemy] is a preacher or a schoolmaster; if this be the things in his heart, then how can he be trusted to teach the love and reverence of RasūlAllāh ﷺ to those in his care or his audience?

It is definitely obligatory to publicise the blasphemies of such people[809] – for the right of the Prophet ﷺ and the right of the Sharīáh. If the blasphemer is not a scholar or a person of religious authority, even then defending the right of the Prophet and guarding his honour is a religious duty; and to support him against those who seek to hurt him, whether in his worldly life or after his passing is a right upon every believer. However, if one person stands to fulfil this duty[810] in the service of the Messenger, to aid the Truth and establish the ruling, then the responsibility is waived from others and it is not obligatory on all others anymore – yet, it is recommended for others to attest this person's actions and support him to warn against the evil of the blasphemer.

Our elders have unanimously agreed that it is necessary to document and publicise the state of a Ĥadīth narrator accused of lying – then what about this man [who has blasphemed against the Nabiy ﷺ]? Abū Muĥammad ibn Abi Zayd was asked about a witness who has overheard such things about Allāh táālā – is it

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[807] For example, Alahazrat listed the blasphemies of Deobandi elders to refute them.

[808] Such as an amīr or a qāđī – the governor or the judge.

[809] So that people are warned of such hypocrites and keep away from them and their sugar-coated and hollow speech.

[810] Khafājī: It is a communal obligation [farđ kifāyah] not an individual obligation [farđ áyn].

allowed for him to keep quiet? He answered that if it is hoped that his testimony will result in a prosecution, he should bear witness. Similarly, it is necessary to bear witness in front of a governor who follows the ruling that repentance of blasphemer is acceptable and hence spares the death penalty; in fact it is necessary to [complain and] bear witness.

Except for these two purposes, I do not see any other reason for narrating such things. It is not permissible to rake things concerning the honour of RasūlAllāh ﷺ and to rinse one's mouth with obscene mentions of RasūlAllāh ﷺ – neither for the person who mentions it, nor who repeats it – it is not permissible for either of them to utter it except for a valid sharaýī reason. And for the purposes mentioned above,[811] it is either obligatory or recommended [depending on the situation]. Allāh táālā has mentioned the words of disbelievers which is slandering and belying His prophets; He has mentioned this to repudiate them and to warn against their kufr and to inform of His Promise to punish the beliers; and this is mentioned in the Holy Book which is also recited. Such examples are also found in the authentic Ĥadīth of the Prophet ﷺ. Our elder scholars and those who followed them agreed that it is permissible to narrate statements of infidels and heretics, in gatherings and in their books to analyse and demonstrate their invalidity and clarify doubts concerning them. Even though it is reported that Imām AĤmad ibn Ĥanbal was opposed to Ĥārith ibn al-Asad al-MuĤāsibi for doing so, he himself cited such things in his refutation of Jahmīs and those who claimed that the Qur'ān is created speech.

True, citation of such things are permissible in certain situations, however statements that are insulting to the Prophet or things that are disparaging and derogatory to his exalted station should not be narrated by way of stories and casual chatting or just to be novel[812] or eccentric or for gossip, whether serious or silly discussions, or mirth and jokes of clowns; and tasteless and bizzare blathering and pointless arguments or idle talk; in all these cases, it is prohibited to mention such blasphemies, some cases being severe and worse than others. If a person cites such things, neither with an intention, nor aware that it is disrespectful to the Messenger ﷺ, and it is also not his habit of mentioning such things, or if what he narrates is not very ugly, or he does not justify the blasphemer he is citing or says it in a way of commending the blasphemer or proving his speech valid – then such a person will be rebuked and will be censured against repeating such a thing again. If he has mentioned loathsome words in what he cites,[813] he shall be severely reprimanded.

A man came to Imam Mālik and said: 'What is your opinion about a person who says the Qur'ān is created?' Mālik replied: ['This person is] a kāfir, execute him' The person [panicked and] said: 'I am quoting someone else.' Imām Mālik said: 'But we have heard it from you.' Imām Malik said so only to reproach the person and to harshly reprimand him, because [it is a fact] that the person was not executed. If such a narrator [of blasphemies] is accused of fabricating such quotes and [falsely] attributing it to others; or such is his habit or it is demonstrable that he says it in an approving tone, or is enthusiastic about it or trivialises it[814] or [is eager] to memorise such things or seek out such things and recite poems which mock or insult the Master ﷺ – in all

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[811] Bearing witness, issuing a ruling or repudiating them.

[812] Like Hamza Yūsuf Hanson likes to talk about Dante's *Divine Comedy* or mentions it in his recommended reading list. Even more surprising are those scholars who do not feel Hamza has committed any error and wave it away as a fly upon their noses.

[813] And this is not for a purpose such as bearing witness or issuing a ruling; but in the course of idle chatting.

[814] I wonder, if Hamza Yūsuf were in Andalusia a thousand years ago, would the judge [most likely a Mālikī] spare him from the gallows or do *istitabah*? I wonder.

such cases, this person takes the ruling of the blasphemer himself and his excuse that he is narrating from others will not avail him. Such a person shall be put to the sword immediately and hastily dispatched to the pits of fire. Abū Úbayd Qāsim ibn Sallām said about a person who had memorised a part of a [poetic] verse which mocked the Prophet ﷺ that it was kufr.[815]

Scholars who wrote about ijmāá have said: Muslims are unanimously agreed that it is Ĥarām to narrate or quote speech that mocks the Prophet ﷺ or to write it down, or read it,[816] or to leave it unerased when one comes across such things. May Allāh táālā have mercy upon our elders, the pious and righteous folk, who were guarded and extremely careful about their religion that they dropped such things from annals and records of battles and biographies, and abstained from narrating such things except very little; and even then, only that which is not disgusting. The rules of citation [they followed were] according to the categories mentioned earlier, and to show how a blasphemer invites the Wrath of Allāh táālā and to arrest the slanderer. Thus, Abū Úbayd Qāsim ibn Sallām mentioned a person who was lampooned in Arabic poetry as merely 'the satirised' without further details, to avoid naming him in his book, mindful of another Muslim's honour and because of his [Ibn Sallām's] scrupulousness; then what about the honour and esteem of the Master of all mankind ﷺ; should we not be more careful and responsible?

The Seventh Case: When a person mentions things that are permissible for the Prophet ﷺ or is debated among scholars whether it is permissible – concerning certain human attributes. Or concerning the trials and hardship he endured in the path of Allāh táālā or patience when he was harassed and persecuted by his enemies; and the initial period of his ﷺ blessed life, and the resistance and suffering of those days. If any of these [facts] are mentioned in narration of [historical] reports or recounting the history of Islām or to learn and teach the extent of divine immunity for prophets, then such descriptions are outside the previously mentioned six cases because there is neither insinuation [against prophets] and degradation nor disrespect – neither in words used for description nor in the intended meaning of those words. However, it is necessary to restrict discussing such topics in the circle of knowledgeable folk, religious thinkers, students of religious knowledge who can benefit from such narrations; and avoid mentioning them in front of ignoramuses, audacious folk [who are heedless of their religion] and such people who are potential mischief-makers. Our elders did not like to teach the tafsīr of Sūrah Yūsuf to women because it includes story of enticement and stratagem – and due to their weakness of understanding and foibles of their perception.

RasūlAllāh ﷺ has himself mentioned his early days and that he tended to flocks of sheep said: "Every prophet has herded sheep"[817] Allāh táālā has also mentioned this about Sayyidunā Mūsā ؑ. This individual statement does not tantamount to degradation of these esteemed personalities or disrespecting them, unlike someone who mentions this to intentionally disparage and ridicule them.[818] Tending sheep was common among Arabs of yore and the Divine Wisdom is that prophets tended sheep as a precursor to shepherding the nation; and Allāh táālā made them to train for the exalted office they would be later honoured with – which was ordained for them in pre-eternity and in His Divine Knowledge. Similarly, Allāh táālā has mentioned his ﷺ being an

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[815] Qārī: If his intention is to memorise it or publicise it.

[816] To satisfy 'intellectual' curiosities.

[817] Qārī: Narrated by Bukhārī and Muslim from Jābir and Bukhārī in another narration from Abū Hurayrah.

[818] In which case, mentioning it thus with such intention becomes blasphemy.

orphan and his ﷺ hardship to show the immense favour upon him ﷺ and the honour He has granted His chosen servant.[819]

If a person mentions this to describe the favours of Allāh táālā upon him ﷺ, it is not degrading or disrespectful to him; in fact, it is proof for his prophethood and his truthful claim of being the Messenger of Allāh. Because, thereafter Allāh táālā gave him ﷺ such influence and power, that gradually all the rich and powerful leaders of Arab tribes and those who opposed to him were [eventually] subdued or vanquished; their treasures and dominions came under his ﷺ command and this could not have happened without Divine aid and support; and Allāh táālā made believers and prominent angels as his helpers. It would not have been such an amazing feat if he ﷺ were the son of a king or a commander of armies prior to the proclamation of his ﷺ prophethood, because ignoramuses[820] would then attribute his success and his triumphs to these external means. It is therefore Hercules, in his conversation with Abū Sufyān asked him: 'Is there any king among his ﷺ forefathers?' Abū Sufyān said: 'No' and Hercules[821] said: 'If any of his ﷺ forefathers were kings, we would say that he seeks the kingdom of his ﷺ forefathers'.

Being orphan is one of the signs that were present in books of ancients and prophecies retold among previous nations; thus it is mentioned in the Book of Jeremiah.[822] Ibn Dhī-Yazan described this attribute to Ábd al-Muţţalib and Baĥīrā to Abū Ţālib. Similarly, that he did not learn to read and write [ummī] is an attribute Allāh táālā has mentioned in his ﷺ praise; and it is a superior attribute for him on account of the Qur'ān which is the greatest of his miracles; because, the knowledge and wisdom that was revealed to him would not be possible except for a Messenger of God, [who brought all this] without having learned to read or write, nor was he taught or instructed – yet he brings such an eloquent and astonishing book, which defies description and is beyond the capacity of humans. Thus, mentioning that he is a *ummi*[823] is not disparaging him – because after all, the purpose of learning to read and write is to augment one's knowledge; thus it is an important tool and means to attain more knowledge. The ability to read or write is not a goal in itself, [rather, the objective is to attain knowledge using these tools]. When that objective [of knowledge] is present already without any need for means and tools, they become inconsequential. The inability to read or write is a flaw for others, because they remain ignorant and gullible because of their illiteracy.

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[819] Sūrah Đuĥā, 93:6-7.

[820] Like Abu'l Álā Mawdūdī said in his *Taĥrīk e Islāmī ki Akhlāqī Buniyādeň*, p17.

> However, a worthless person was neither useful in the pagan times [*jāhiliyyah*] nor useful in Islām. The Prophet ﷺ achieved a resounding success in Arabia – and the effect of which was felt over a large part of the world, from the river of Sindh to the shores of Atlantic. After all, the reason for this [success] was that he ﷺ had found the finest among human resources who possessed a powerful character. If, God forbid, he ﷺ were to deal with a herd of craven, cowardly, weak-willed and untrustworthy people, would it be possible to achieve the same result?

In other words, according to Mawdūdī, the success of Islām was not because of the Prophet ﷺ, but rather because he had found a fine specimen of humans with a solid character. Qāđī Íyāđ has rightly termed the freethinker Mawdūdī as a *jāhil*.

[821] The Roman emperor in the time of RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

[822] *Armiyā'a* in Arabic.

[823] However, the translation of this term in other languages as illiterate is disrespectful; one should say unlettered or unread or uninstructed. In 2011, an imbecile from Birmingham named Zahir Mahmood claimed that Allāh's Messenger was a 'bedouin' and then said: "it would be no exaggeration to say that many of the youngsters here could read better than RasūlAllāh ﷺ'.

Glory be to Him who distinguished the Prophet ﷺ from all others – and what is a flaw for all others [in not having learned to read and write] is a mark of honour for him ﷺ.[824] Similarly, his ﷺ life was untouched by such an action which would have killed anyone else – such as the cleaving of his ﷺ bosom and removal of a portion from his ﷺ blessed heart.[825] So also is the narration of his abstinence from worldly comforts and frugality in food, clothes, mounts; his humility and that he did his work and that of his family himself, his austerity and withdrawal from this mundane world, and he valued the great and small as the same – temporal and ephemeral; inconstant and fickle. All these descriptions are praiseworthy attributes and highlight his noble character as mentioned earlier. If anyone mentions these to draw inspiration or any such purpose is commendable; but if one mentions these things to insinuate and criticise, then he will be judged according to the previous [six] cases.

Whenever one encounters a Ĥadīth concerning prophets in which such words are mentioned which are problematic in their literal meaning, it is necessary to interpret such words favourably; also it is not obligatory to mention such things except authentic narrations and should not narrate except which is well established and known. May Allāh táālā have mercy upon Imām Mālik who disliked narration of such reports which are ambiguous and problematic, and he said: 'What makes people to narrate such things?' He was told, Ibn Ájlān narrates such reports and he dismissed with: 'He is not a discerning scholar'.[826] Alas! If everyone had only followed Mālik's example and abstained from perpetuating such narrations – after all, most of such reports are not actionable [and are merely of academic interest]. Many of our elders [salaf] disliked narration of such reports which do not entail acting upon them. The Prophet mentioned such things in front of native Arabs who understood his speech perfectly well,[827] who understood the context and usage of those words, whether such phrases were idioms or used figuratively or whether those words were metaphors or used allegorically – therefore it was not problematic for them [and hence congruent with everything else].

But those who came after them were not well-versed with the language of Arabs and had non-Arab influences in their speech and hence the misunderstanding or defect in understanding of the object of the native-Arabic except what was in plain language; and they did not understand [some forms of] figurative speech and metaphors and the context of revelation; they did not comprehend the subtleties of language and therefore differed in interpretation of such words, or insisted on the literal meaning – some believed in these reports and some others disbelieved.[828] It is obligatory to abstain from narrating such [problematic] reports which are inauthentic or weak; particularly if such reports are baseless and fabricated. It is not permissible to utter things

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[824] Because he has the knowledge and perception far greater than all learned people in the universe; his knowledge is granted by Allāh táālā and he was not instructed by anyone else in the creation; his teacher is Allāh táālā and Allāh táālā alone.

[825] This is known as "portion ***for*** the Devil"; this is a portion of the heart which is vulnerable to Satan's guiles – and the doorway through which he enters the hearts of humans. This was removed from his ﷺ blessed heart – and the doorway eliminated, and thus divinely protecting him ﷺ from the Devil.

[826] *faqīh.*

[827] *kalām al-árab*: Native and High Arabic. It must be noted that Qāđī Íyāđ was among those masters who [then were fast disappearing] were well-versed with high Arabic. Indeed, his exegesis of *Muslim*, *Ikmāl al-Múlim* and the lexicon *Mashāriqu'l Anwār* are indispensable resources for all Ĥadīth scholars who came afterward who frequently resort to these works for meanings of arcane words mentioned in Ĥadīth.

[828] Because they were not convinced with interpretations and literal meanings conflicted with other texts and they could not reconcile such things.

which are disrespectful to Allāh táālā or His prophets – neither should one narrate any report nor attempt to expound the meanings of such reports; rather, leave them unsaid.

The only exception for mentioning such reports is to manifest the status of such reports. Scholars disapproved of Abū Bakr ibn Fūrak for his interpretation of weak, baseless and fabricated reports or those found in books of Jews and Christians who combine truth with falsehood. All that needs to be done with such reports is reject them with a warning that they are weak reports instead of laboriously attempting to clarify them – after all the objective of clarification is to answer objections and rejecting them completely is far easier and a sound approach.

Appendix H

GLOSSARY

adhā	Minor evil, offence or harm by word or deed; and if it is severe it will be termed đarar
ahl al-qiblah	Those who pray facing the qiblah, in the direction of Makkah; that is Muslims in general. According to Sunni scholars, Ahl al-Qiblah refers to those people who agree upon Essentials of faith.
dalīl qaṭýī	Absolute Evidence
đarūrī	Necessary, Essential; when mentioned with an aspect of religion, it means such a tenet or belief which is necessary to believe in, and anyone who denies it is a kāfir.
Ĥadd	Statutory punishment. One of the literal meanings of Ĥadd is 'prevention.' Certain punishments are termed Ĥadd because they are meant to be deterrents to committing certain sins and specified in the sharīáh.
Ĥalāl	Permissible by the sharīáh
Ĥarām	Forbidden by the sharīáh
ijmāá	Consensus of a group of scholars, or companions, or Muslims in general. *ijmāá al-úlamā, ijmāá as-ṣaĤābah, ijmāá al-ummah*
ijtihād	Literally, to strive. The ability of a scholar to independently arrive at an opinion and derive from either primary or secondary sources of law; one who exercises ijtihād is a mujtahid.
ikfār	To rule someone kāfir
ílm al-muṭlaq	Absolute and all-encompassing knowledge
imkān al-wuqūý́ī	Possiblity to occur
imtināá al-wuqūýī	Impossible to occur, existentially impossible
istiáānah	To seek help [usually used to mean intercession of prophets and saints]
istighāthah	To seek relief [usually used to mean intercession of prophets and saints]
istiĤālah/mustaĤīl	Impossiblity, Impossible
istimdād	To seek help [usually used to mean intercession of prophets and saints]

jamāáh	The congregation
jawāz áqlī	The rational category of Possibility
jāyiz/mumkin	In jurisprudence, this means permissible; but in theology, this refers to something that can exist, possible to exist.
kāfir	Disbeliever
kāfir aṣlī	The original kāfir
kufr	Disbelief
kufr al-aṣlī	Disbelief from the outset, original disbelief
kufr al-ṭārī	Acquired disbelief, apostasy.
makrūh taĥrīmī	Prohibitively disliked
marfūú ĥadīth	A ĥadīth that is 'elevated' such that the chain reaches to the Prophet ﷺ; and the ĥadīth indicates either the words, actions or acceptance of the Prophet ﷺ.
mubtadiý	The heretic, innovator; a man of bidáh
muĥāl	Impossible, Impossibility
muĥāl áqlī	The rational category of Impossibility
muĥāl áraḍī	Intrinsically possible to exist, but becomes impossible due to extraneous reasons. Contingently impossible.
muĥāl dhātī	Essentially impossible, Intrinsicially Impossible
mumkin	Possible, Possibility
mumkin dhātī	Intrinsically Possible, Intrinsic Possibility
mumkin istiýdādī	Possible to Occur, Possibility of Occurrence; also *mumkin wuqūýī, imkān wuqūýī*
mumtaniý bi'l ghayr	Intrinsically Possible, but becomes impossible due to an extraneous condition
mumtaniý wuqūýī	Impossible to Occur, Impossibility of Occurrence
murtadd	An apostate; a person who becomes a disbeliever after having been a believer at some point is a murtadd, an apostate.
mutakallimūn	Kalām scholars

mutawāţīr	Something that is universally known, unanimously agreed upon and transmitted through successive generations without anybody disputing it; something which is undeniable and indubitable.
muţlaq al-ílm	Knowledge, absolutely
qadhaf	Slander, and also specifically as Accusation of Adultery.
qaţýī al-dalālah	Absolute in its implication
qiṣāṣ	Equitable Recompense, Blood-money
riddah	Apostasy
sabb/shatm	***dhamm***: to deplore, to decry, to condemn
	ghađđ: is tanqiṣ of lesser magnitude; that is slighting
	hajw: mockery, satire
	Ĥujr: obscene speech, profanity, revile
	istikhfāf: disdain, disregard
	izrā'a: reproach, chide, rebuke, scorn
	sabb: insult, sabb is the worst form of shatm
	shatm: disrespect
	sukhf: banal speech
	taárīđ: to object, disapprove
	tanqīṣ: is to disparage, to find flaws, fault
	taşghīr: to diminish or to belittle
tawātur	Something that is universally known, unanimously agreed upon and transmitted through successive generations without anybody disputing it; something which is undeniable and indubitable.
wājib	Obligatory, when used in Fiqh; Necessary, when used in Kalām
wājib áradī	Contingently Necessary
wājib dhātī	Intrinsically Necessary, Essentially Necessary

zandaqah, zindīq A *zindīq* is a person who is a freethinker; who does not believe in any of the well-known religions or well-known sects within a religion. It is also used to describe a person who rejects religion completely and religious laws [even if he is not an atheist]. The term is also used to describe those who claim to profess Islām outwardly, but secretly they hold beliefs that contradict Islām.

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1. *Anwār al-Tanzīl wa Asrār al-Ta'wīl* or *Tafsīr al-Bayđāwī*, Imām Abū Saýīd al-Bayđāwī (d. 685 AH)
2. *Baĥr al-Úlūm*, Abu'l Layth Naşr ibn Muĥammad al-Samarqandī (d. 375 AH)
3. *Jāmiý li Aĥkām al-Qur'ān* or *Tafsīr Qurţubī*, Imām Abū Ábdullāh al-Qurţubī (d. 671 AH)
4. *Kanz al-Īmān*, Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān - (d. 1340 AH)
5. *Lubāb al-Tā'wīl fī Máānī al-Tanzīl* or *Tafsīr Khāzin*, Imām Álī bin Muĥammad Al-Khāzin (d. 725 AH)
6. *Máālim al-Tanzīl*, Imām Ĥusayn ibn Masúūd al-Baghawi (d. 516 AH)
7. *Mafātīĥ al-Ghayb* or *Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, Imām Fakhruddīn Muĥammad ibn Umar ar-Rāzī (d. 606AH)
8. *Rūĥ al-Bayān*, Mawlānā Ismāýīl Ĥaqqī al-Bursāwī (d. 1127 AH)
9. *Sharĥ A-lam Nashraĥ*, Mawlānā Naqī Álī Khān (d. 1286 AH)
10. *Muĥarrar al-Wajīz* or *Tafsīr Ibn Áţiyyah,* Ibn Áţiyyah (d. 546 AH)
11. *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, Ĥāfiż Imād al-Dīn Abu'l Fīđā' ibn Umar ibn Kathīr (d. 774 AH)

C. Ĥadīth and Commentaries

12. *Ashiátu'l Lamáāt fī Sharĥ Mishkāt*, Shaykh Ábd al-Ĥaq al-Dihlawī (958-1052 AH)
13. *Dībāj álā al-Śaĥiĥ Muslim ibn-Ĥajjāj*, Imām Jalāluddīn Suyūţī (849 – 911 AH)
14. *Fat'ĥ al-Bārī*, Imām Aĥmad ibn Alī ibn Ĥajar al- Ásqalānī (d. 852 AH)
15. *Ikhtiyār al-Awlā*, Ábd al-Raĥmān ibn Rajab al-Ĥanbalī (d. 795 AH)
16. *Ikmāl al-Múlim*, Abu'l Fađl Qāđī Íyāđ ibn Mūsā al-Yaĥsūbī al-Mālikī (d. 544 AH)
17. *Irshād al-Sārī*, Shihāb al-Dīn Abu'l Ábbās Aĥmad ibn Muĥammad al-Qasţallāni (d. 923 AH)
18. *Jāmiý Tirmidhī*, Imām Abū Ýīsā Muĥammad al-Tirmidhī (d.279 AH)
19. *Kashf al-Khafā*, Imām Ismāýīl ibn Muĥammad Ájlūnī (d. 1162 AH)
20. *Minhāj al-Ţālibīn*, Imam Yaĥyā Ibn Sharaf al-Nawawī (d. 676 AH)
21. *Mirqāt al-Mafātīĥ Sharĥ Mishkāt al-Maşābīĥ*, Mawlānā Alī ibn Sulţān al-Qārī (d. 1014 AH)
22. *Mishkāt al-Maşābīĥ*, Walīyuddīn ibn Ábdullāh al-Tabrīzī - (died after 737 AH)
23. *Mújam*, Abu'l Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Aĥmad al-Ţabarānī (d. 360 AH)
24. *Musnad Abī Áwānah*, Imām Yáqūb ibn Is'ĥāq al-Isfaraynī (d. 928 AH)
25. *Musnad Imām Aĥmad*, Imām Aĥmad ibn Ĥanbal (d. 241 AH)
26. *Mustadrak álā as-Şaĥīĥayn*, Muĥammad al-Ĥākim al-Nīsābūri (d. 405 AH)
27. *Muwaţţā*, Imām Mālik ibn Anas (d. 179 AH)
28. *Şaĥīĥ al-Bukhārī*, Abū Ábdullāh Muĥammad ibn Ismāýīl al-Bukhārī (194 – 256 AH)
29. *Sahīĥ Muslim*, Imām Muslim ibn al-Ĥajjāj al-Qushayrī (204 – 261 AH)
30. *Şaĥīĥ Ibn Ĥibbān*, Imām Abū Ĥātim Muĥammad ibn Ĥibbān (d. 354 AH)
31. *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, Imām Abū Dawūd Sulaymān al-Sajistānī (202-275 AH)

32. *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, Imām Abdullāh ibn Muĥammad ibn Mājah (207-273 AH)
33. *Sunan Nasāyī*, Imām Aĥmad ibn Shuayb al-Nasāyī (d. 303 AH)
34. *Targhīb wa'l Tarhīb*, Imām Ábd al-Áżīm al-Mundhiri (581 – 656 AH)
35. *Úmdatu'l Qārī Sharĥ Saĥiĥ Bukhārī*, Imām Badruddīn Maĥmūd al-Aynī (d. 855 AH)

D. Áqāýid and Kalām

36. *Alfāż al-Kufr*, Muĥammad ibn Ismāýīl Badr al-Rashīd (d. 768 AH)
37. *Anwār e Sāţiáh Dar Bayān Mawlūd o Fatiĥah*, Mawlānā Ábd al-Samīý Rampuri (d. 1318 AH)
38. *Áqīdah al-Taĥāwiyyah*, Imām Abū Jaáfar al-Ţaĥāwī (d. 323 AH)
39. *Asmā'a wa's Şifāt*, Abū Bakr Aĥmad ibn Ĥusayn al-Bayhaqī (d. 453/1066)
40. *Daf' al-Talbīsāt*, Mawlānā Sayyid Naýīmuddīn Murādābādi (d. 1367/1948)
41. *Dawlah al-Makkiyyah bi'l Māddah al-Ghaybiyyah*, Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān (d.1340/1921)
42. *Farq Bayn al-Firaq*, Abū Manşūr Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī (d.429AH)
43. *Ghāyat al-Ma'mūl*, Sayyid Aĥmad al-Barzanjī (d. 1332 AH)
44. *Ĥaqq al-Mubīn*, Mawlānā Sayyid Aĥmad Kāżmī (d. 1986 CE)
45. *Ĥāshiyah Sharĥ al-Mawāqif*, Abdu'l Ĥakīm Siyalkūtī (died after 1275 AH)
46. *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn álā Manĥar al-Kufri wa'l Mayn*, Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān (d. 1340 AH)
47. *Ibţāl e Aghlāţ e Qāsimiyyah*, Shaykh Ábd al-Ghafūr
48. *Īmān, Kufr and Takfīr*, Nuh Ha Mim Keller
49. *Ismāýīl Dihlawī aur un ki Taqwiyatu'l Īmān*, Shaykh Abu'l Ĥasan Zayd Fārūqī (1324 – 1414 AH)
50. *Iýlām bi Qawāţiý al-Islām*, Shaykhu'l Islām Abu'l Abbās Aĥmad Ibn Ĥajar al-Haytamī (909-974 AH)
51. *Izālatu'l Áār bi Ĥajri'l Karāyim án Kilābi'n Nār*, Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān (d. 1340 AH)
52. *Jalā'a al-Qulūb*, Mawlānā Muĥammad ibn Jaáfar al-Kattānī (1274 – 1345 AH)
53. *Jawharah al-Tawĥid*, Burhānuddīn Ibrāhīm al-Laqqānī al-Mālikī (d.1041 AH)
54. *Kawkabatu'sh Shihābiyyah fī Kufriyyāti Abi'l Wahābiyyah*, Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān (1272 – 1340 AH)
55. *Mawāqif*, Imām Ađududdīn Abd al-Raĥmān al-Ījī (d. 756 AH)
56. *Min Áqāýidi Ahl al-Sunnah*, Shaykh Ábd al-Ĥakīm Sharaf Qādirī (d. 2007 CE)
57. *Minaĥ al-Rawđ al-Az'har Sharĥ Fiqh al-Akbar*, Mullā Alī al-Qārī (d. 1014/1605)
58. *Mustanad Al-Mútamad Bināyi Najāt al-Abad*, Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān - (d.1340 AH)
59. *Mútaqad al-Muntaqad*, Shāh Fađl al-Rasūl Badāyūnī (d. 1289 AH)
60. *Preamble to Faith*, Translation by Abū Ĥasan Riđawī
61. *Qistās fī Mawāzinati Athar Ibn Ábbās*, Shaykh Muĥammad Thānawī
62. *Sall al-Suyūf al-Hindiyyah álā Kufriyyati Bābā al-Najdiyyah*, Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān (d. 1340 AH)
63. *Şārim al-Maslūl álā Shātim al-Rasūl*, Abū'l Abbās Aĥmad ibn Abd al-Ĥalīm Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 AH)
64. *Sayf al-Jabbār*, Shāh Fađl al-Rasūl Badāyūnī (d. 1289 AH)
65. *Sayf al-Maslūl álā man Sabb al-Rasūl*, Imām Taqīyuddīn Abu'l Ĥasan Álī al-Subkī (683 – 756 AH)
66. *Sharĥ al-Áqāýid an-Nasafiyyah,* Sáduddīn Masúūd Taftāzānī (712-793 AH)

67. *Sharĥ al-Maqāṣid*, Sáduddīn Masúūd Taftāzānī (712-793 AH)
68. *Sharĥ Al-Mawāqif*, Sayyid Sharīf Alī al-Jurjāni (d. 816 AH)
69. *Sharĥ al-Muqaddimāt*, Imām Muĥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (832-895AH)
70. *Sharĥ al-Ţaĥāwīyyah*, Akmaluddīn Muĥammad al-Bābartī (712 – 786 AH)
71. *Sharĥ al-Wustā*, Imām Muĥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (832-895AH)
72. *Sub'ĥān al-Subbūĥ án Áybi Kadhib Maqbūĥ*, Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān (d. 1340)
73. *Tabyīn Kadhib al-Muftarī*, Abu'l Qāsim Álī ibn Ĥasan Ibn Ásākir (499-571 AH)
74. *Taĥqīq al-Fatwā bi Ibţāl al-Taghwā*, Fađl al-Ĥaqq Khayrābādī (d. 1278 AH)
75. *Tamhīd e Īmān*, Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān (d. 1340 AH)
76. *Tanbīh al-Juhhāl*, Shaykh Ĥāfiž Bakhsh
77. *Taqdīs al-Wakīl án Tawhīn al-Rashīd wa'l Khalīl*, Mawlānā Ghulām Dastagīr Qasūrī (d. 1315 AH)
78. *Truth About a Lie*, Abū Ĥasan Riđawī
79. *Tuĥfah al-Muĥtāj*, Imām Ibn Ĥajar al-Makkī (909-974 AH)
80. *Úmdatu Ahl al-Tawfīq wa'l Tasdīd*, Imām Muĥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (832-895AH)
81. *Umm al-Barāhīn*, Imām Muĥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (832-895AH)

E. Fiqh and Usūl al-Fiqh

82. *Ashbāh wa'n Nażāyir*, Imām Zaynuddīn ibn Nujaym al-Miṣrī (d.970 AH)
83. *Áţāyā al-Nabawiyyah fi'l Fatāwā ar-Riđāwiyyah*, Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān (d. 1340 AH)
84. *Badāyiý al-Ṣanāyiý*, Imām Álāuddīn Abū Bakr al-Kāsānī (d.587 AH)
85. *Baĥr ar-Rāyiq*, Imām Zaynuddīn ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Nujaym al-Ĥanafī al-Miṣrī (d. 970 AH)
86. *Bināyah álā al-Hidayah*, Imām Badruddīn Maĥmūd al-Áynī (d. 855 AH)
87. *Dhakhīrah*, Shihābuddīn Aĥmad ibn al-Qarāfī (d. 684 AH)
88. *Durr al-Mukhtār Sharĥ Tanwīr al-Abṣār*, Allāmah Álā'uddīn al-Ĥaskafī (d. 1088 AH)
89. *Durar al-Ĥukkām fī Sharĥi Ghurar al-Aĥkām,* Állāmah Mawlā Khusraw
90. *Dusūqī álā Sharĥ al-Kabīr li Abi'l Barakāt al-Dardīr*, Shamsuddīn Muĥammad al-Dusūqī (d. 1230 AH)
91. *Fatāwā al-Bazzāziyyah*, Imām Muĥammad Khawārzamī al-Bazzazī (d. 827 AH)
92. *Fatāwā al-Khayriyyah*, Állāmah Khayr al-Dīn ibn Aĥmad al-Ramlī (d. 1081 CE)
93. *Al-Fiqhu álā Madhāhib al-Arbáah*, Ábd al-Raĥmān al-Jazīrī (d. 1360 AH)
94. *Fat'ĥ al-Qadīr*, Imām Kamāluddin Ibn al-Humām (d. 861 AH)
95. *Fatāwā al-Hindiyyah*
96. *Fatāwā Amjadiyyah*, Muftī Jalāluddīn Aĥmad Amjadi
97. *Fatāwā e Faqih e Millat*, Muftī Jalāluddīn Aĥmad Amjadi
98. *Fatāwā Fayđ al-Rasūl*, Muftī Jalāluddīn Aĥmad Amjadi
99. *Fatāwā Imām Nawawī*, Imām Nawawī (d. 676 AH)
100. *Fatāwā Imām Subkī*, Imām Taqīyuddīn Álī al-Subkī (d. 756 AH)
101. *Fatāwā Khulāşah*

102. *Fatāwā Muayyad Zādah*, Muayyad Zādah
103. *Fatāwā Tātārkhāniyyah*, Áālim ibn Álā'a al-Indrapatī al-Dihlawī (d. 786 AH)
104. *Fatāwā Żahīriyyah*, Żahīr al-Dīn Abū Bakr Muĥammad bin Aĥmad bin Umar al-Bukhārī (d. 619 AH)
105. *Fiqh al-Islāmī wa Adillatuh*, Dr.Wahbah Zuhayli
106. *Fuṣūl al-Ímādiyyah*, Imām Ábd al-Raĥmān (d. 561 AH)
107. *Ghamz al-Uyūn al-Baṣāyir Sharĥ Al-Ashbāh wa'n Nażāyir*, Aĥmad al-Ĥamawī (d. 1098 AH)
108. *Ĥadīqatu'n Nadiyyah*, Imām Abd al-Ghanī al-Nablūsī al-Ĥanafī (d. 1143/1731)
109. *Hadiyyah al-Álā'yiyyah*, Imām Álā'uddin Ibn Áābidīn (d. 1306 AH)
110. *Ĥāshiyah Tuĥfah*, Ábd al-Ĥamīd al-Shirwānī
111. *Jāmiý al-Fuṣūlayn*, Qāđī Maĥmūd ibn Isrāyīl Ibn Samāwinah (d.823 AH)
112. *Kashf al-Ghummah*, Ábd al-Wahhāb al-Shárānī (d. 9731565)
113. *Khulāṣatu'l Fatāwā*, Állāmah Ţāhir Ibn Aĥmad (d. 542 AH)
114. *Kitāb al-Furūú*, Muĥammad ibn Mufliĥ al-Maqdisī (d.763 AH)
115. *Kitāb Al-Ĥujjah alā Ahl al-Madīnah*, Imām Muĥammad ibn Ĥasan al-Shaybānī (d. 189 AH)
116. *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, Imām Abū Yūsuf Yáqūb ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ansārī (d. 182/798)
117. *Majmá al-Anhur Sharĥ Multaqā al-Abhur*, Állāmah Shaykhī Zādah (d. 944 AH)
118. *Muĥīţ al-Burhānī*, Burhānuddīn Ábd al-Ázīz ibn Māzah al-Bukhārī (d.616 AH)
119. *Mukhtaşar al-Ţaĥāwī*, Imām Abū Jaáfar al-Ţaĥāwī (d. 321 AH)
120. *Nutaf*, Abu'l Ĥasan Álī al-Sughdī (d. 461 AH)
121. *Qawāýid al-Kubrā*, Imām Ízzuddīn Ábd al-Ázīz ibn Ábd al-Salām (d. 660 AH)
122. *Radd al-Muĥtār*, Imām Sayyid Muĥammad Amīn Ibn Áābidīn al-Shāmī (d. 1252 AH)
123. *Sharĥ al-Ṣaghīr*, Burhānuddīn Ibrāhīm al-Laqqānī al-Mālikī (d. 1041 AH)
124. *Tanbīh al-Wulāt wa'l Ĥukkām álā Aĥkāmi Shātimi Khayr al-Anām*, Ibn Aābidīn Shāmī (d. 1252 AH)
125. *Ţarīqah al-Muĥammadiyyah*, Imām Birgivi (d. 981 AH)
126. *Úqūd Rasm al-Mufti*, Imām Muĥammad Amīn Ibn Aābidīn Shāmī (d. 1252 AH)
127. *Zubdah al-Zakiyyah fī Taĥrīmi Sajdah al-Taĥiyyah*, Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān (d. 1340 AH)

F. Sīrah

128. *Khaṣāyiṣ al-Kubrā*, Imām Jalāluddīn Suyūţī (d. 911 AH)
129. *Kitāb al-Shifā bi Tárīfi Ĥuqūq al-Muşţafá*, Qāđī Iyāđ (d. 544 AH)
130. *Madārij al-Nubuwwah*, Shaykh Abd al-Ĥaq Muĥadith al-Dihlawī (d. 1052 AH)
131. *Nasīm ar-Riyāđ Sharĥ al-Shifā Qāđī Iyāđ*, Shihāb al-Dīn al-Khafājī (d. 1069 AH)
132. *Sharĥ al-Shifā Qāđī Iyāđ*, Alī ibn Sulţān Muĥammad al-Qārī (d. 1014 AH)
133. *Muzīl al-Khafā án Alfāż al-Shifā*, Ĥāfiż Shumunnī (d. 872 AH)

G. Taşawwuf

134. *Asrāru'sh Sharīáh*, Imām Abd al-Ghanī al-Nablūsī al-Ĥanafī (d. 1143 AH)

135. *Futuĥāt al-Makkiyyah*, Shaykh al-Akbar Muĥiyuddīn Ibn Árabī (d. 638 AH)
136. *Futuhat al-Ilāhiyyah fi'l Mabāĥith al-Aşliyyah,* Aĥmad ibn Ájībah al-Ĥasanī (d. 1224 AH)
137. *Ĥikam*, Tājuddīn Aĥmad ibn Áţāyillāh al-Sakandarī (d. 709 AH)
138. *Iĥyā'a Úlūm al-Din*, Imām Muĥammad Ghazālī (d. 505 AH)

H. Tārīkh

139. *Akhbār al-Ĥamqā wa'l Mughaffalīn*, Imām Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597 AH)
140. *Bidāyah wa'n Nihāyah*, Ĥāfiż Abu'l Fīđā' Ismāýīl ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373)
141. *Kitāb al-Quşşāş*, Abū Al Faraj Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597 AH)
142. *Siyar Aálām al-Nubalā*, Imām Shamsuddīn al-Dhahabī (d. 748 AH)

I. Lexicons

143. *Tāj al-Árūs*, Imām Murtađā al-Zabīdī (1145-1205 AH)

G. Asmā'a ar-Rijāl

144. *Lisān al-Mīzān*, Imām Ibn Ĥajar al-Ásqalānī (d. 852 AH)
145. *Ţabaqāt al-Ĥuffāż*, Imām Jalāluddīn Suyūţī (d. 911 AH)
146. *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, Jamāl al-Dīn Abi al-Ĥajjaj al-Mizzī (654 – 742 AH)
147. *Usdu'l Ghābah fī Márifati'ş Şaĥābah*, Ízzuddīn Ibn al-Athīr al-Jazarī (d. 630 AH)

H. Poetry

148. *Al-Úmdah fī Sharĥ Al-Burdah*, Ibn Ĥajar al-Haytamī (d. 974 AH)
149. *Ĥadāyiq e Bakh'shish*, Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān (d. 1340 AH)
150. *Afđal al-Qirā li Qurrā'yi Umm al-Qurā* or *Sharĥ Hamziyyah*, Ibn Ĥajar al-Haytami (d. 974 AH)

I. Miscellaneous

151. *Don Quixote*, Miguel de Ceraventes, Translated by John Ormsby
152. *Orientalism*, Edward Said
153. *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq*, Sir Syed Ahmed Khān
154. *Munyah al-Labīb*, Imām Aĥmad Riđā Khān
155. *Zaghal al-Ílm*, Imām Dhahabi (d. 748 AH)

J. Deobandis and their Elders

156. *Akābir e Úlamā e Deoband*, Muĥammad Akbar Shāh Bukhārī
157. *Al-Imdād*, Magazine dated Şafar 1336 AH
158. *Arwāĥ e Salāsah*, with the gloss of Ashraf Álī Thānawī (d. 1362 AH)
159. *Barāhīn al-Qaţiáh álā Żalāmi Anwār al-Sāţiáh*, Khalīl Aĥmad Ambethwī Sahāranpūri (d. 1346 AH)

160. *Bihishtī Zeywar*, Ashraf Álī Thānawī (d. 1362 AH)
161. *Ek Rozī*, Shāh Ismāýīl Dihlawī (d. 1246 AH)
162. *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah*, Rashīd Aĥmad Gangohī (d. 1323 AH)
163. *Faysla Kun Munazara*, Manzur Numani (d. 1997 CE)
164. *Ĥifż al-Īmān*, Ashraf Álī Thānawī (d. 1362 AH)
165. *Ifāđāt al-Yawmiyyah*, sayings of Ashraf Álī Thānawī (d. 1362 AH)
166. *Juhd al-Muqill*, Maĥmūd al-Ĥasan Devbandī (d. 1339 AH)
167. *Makātīb e Rashīdiyyah*, Āāshiq Ilāhi Meerutī
168. *Muhannad*, Khalīl Aĥmad Ambethwī Sahāranpūri (d. 1346 AH)
169. *Nuz'hatu'l Khawāţir*, Ábd al-Ĥayy Lucknawi /Abu'l Ĥasan Nadawī (d.1999 CE)
170. *Shaykh Muĥammad ibn Ábd al-Wahhāb aur Hindustan ke Úlamā*, Manzur Numani (d. 1997 CE)
171. *Shihāb al-Thāqib*, Ĥusayn Aĥmad Tandwi
172. *Şirāţ e Mustaqīm*, Shāh Ismāýīl Dihlawī (d. 1246 AH)
173. *Taghyīr al-Únwān*, Ashraf Álī Thānawī (d. 1362 AH)
174. *Taĥdhīru'n Nās*, Muĥammad Qāsim Nanotwi (d. 1297 AH)
175. *Tanwīr al-Áynayn*, Shāh Ismāýīl Dihlawī (d. 1246 AH)
176. *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān*, Shāh Ismāýīl Dihlawī (d. 1246 AH)
177. *Tārīkh e Mashāyikh e Chisht*, Zakariyyah Kandhlawī
178. *Yīđāĥ al-Ĥaqq*, Shāh Ismāýīl Dihlawī (d. 1246 AH)

TRANSLITERATION KEY

Arabic Letter	Latin Character	Arabic Example	Transliteration	Similar Sound
ا أ ء	a	أمير	**a**mīr	**a**mazing
ب	b	باب	**b**āb	**b**asket
ت ة	t	تاج	**t**āj	**t** in French **t**rois
ث	th	ثابت	**th**ābit	**th**ing
ج	j	جسد	**j**asad	**j**am
ح	Ĥ	حسن	**Ĥ**asan	similar to **h**ose no English equivalent voiceless pharyngeal fricative
خ	kh	خبر	**kh**abar	similar to Scottish lo**ch** no english equivalent
د	d	دار	**d**ār	**d** in French **d**ais
ذ	dh	ذكر	**dh**ikr	**th**ere
ر	r	راشد	**r**āshid	trilled **r** as in **r**ose
ز	z	زكي	**z**akī	**z**ebra
س	s	سهل	**s**ahl	**s**olid
ش	sh	شاب	**sh**āb	**sh**ock
ص	ṣ	صبر	**ṣ**abr	pharyngeal **s** no English equivalent
ض	đ	ضياء	**đ**iyā'a	similar to **d**aughter no English equivalent
ط	ṭ	طب	**ṭ**ibb	pharyngeal **t** no English equivalent
ظ	ż	ظل	**ż**ill	pharyngeal **z** no English equivalent
ع	á, í, ú, ý	عرب علم عمر عيد	**á**rab **í**lm **ú**mar **ý**īd	voiced pharyngeal fricative no English equivalent
غ	gh	غار	**gh**ār	as in French **r** **r**ester voiced uvular fricative
ف	f	فجر	**f**ajr	**f**lower
ق	q	قريب	**q**arīb	a guttural **k** voiceless uvular stop no English equivalent
ك	k	كتاب	**k**itāb	**k**in
ل	l	لباس	**l**ibās	**l**ate

Arabic Letter	Latin Character	Arabic Example	Transliteration	Similar Sound
م	m	مال	**m**āl	**m**orning
ن	n	نور	**n**ūr	**n**oon
ه	h	هدى	**h**udā	**h**ouse
و	w	وزير	**w**azīr	**w**ord
ي	y	يد	**y**ad	**y**ellow
إ	i	إدام	**i**dām	**i**nsight
أ	a	أتم	**a**tam	**a**dvent
ـا	ā	باب	b**ā**b	f**a**ther
ـي	ī	سرير	sar**ī**r	tr**ee**
ـو	ū	طور	ṭ**ū**r	r**oo**t
عا	áā	عالم	**áā**lim	-
عي	ýī	عيد	**ýī**d	-
عو	úū	عود	**úū**d	-
شّ	sh'sh sh-sh	الشمس	ash'shams ash-shams	-
ـأ	a' or a-	مأمور	ma'mūr	-
ـئ	i'y or i-y	بئس	bi'ysa bi-ysa	-
ـؤ	u' or u-	لؤلؤ سؤلك	lu'lu' su-lika	-
	'	أصحاب تكحيل أسهل	aṣ'Ĥāb tak'Ĥīl as'hal	separator to distinguish between sounds represented by letter pairs
	-	أصحاب تكحيل أسهل	aṣ-Ĥāb tak-Ĥīl as-hal	separator to distinguish between sounds represented by letter pairs
	superscript	من	mi^{n}	to indicate an elision
	-	مآرب	ma-ārib	separator when elongation follows a vowel

The definite article **'al'** is not transcribed *always* in transliterating Arabic names for better readability, even if it is incorrect in the original. The following rules are followed:

a. ***al*** is retained when used as an auxiliary, as in Abu Bakr **al**-Bayhaqī and Badruddīn **al**-Áynī.

b. It is omitted when used alone, as in Bayhaqi or Áynī.

c. It is retained when the full name of the book is transcribed, but omitted when the book is known by its popular name like *Durr al-Mukhtār.*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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